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ISBN 0-315-55537-8

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Nietzschean Philosophy in the Works of Frederick Philip Grove

by

Axel Knoenagel

(C)

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Nietzschean Philosophy in the Works of Frederick Philip Grove submitted by Axel Knoenagel in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date ..... June 26 1989 .....

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Dale Wilkie for her efforts; to Aisha Gaboune, Len Wyatt, David Geertsen, Raymond Grant, and Max Baird for their confidence and encouragement; and to the World University Service of Canada for granting me a four-year Canadian Government Award for Foreign Nationals. Most of all, I would like to thank my parents, Ernst and Helga Knoenagel, for their support throughout these many years of school.

Abstract

Traditionally, Frederick Philip Grove's works have been interpreted in the context of Canadian prairie fiction. Most critics have ignored the fact that Grove spent the first thirty years of his life in Germany, where he was exposed to various artistic and philosophical influences, most importantly the Neo-Romanticism of the Stefan George circle and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche.

This thesis argues that Grove's Canadian writing exhibits the same intellectual preoccupations as do his German works and that the unifying element is the Nietzschean influence on the texts. In this thesis, all of Grove's writings are examined under the premise that Nietzschean philosophy contributes significantly to an understanding of Grove's fiction.

After a brief introduction to the main concepts of Nietzschean philosophy and to the cultural climate in Germany at the turn of the century, the thesis, continuing and expanding the work of D.O. Spettigue and E.D. Blodgett, examines Grove's German works, *Wanderungen, Helena und Damon, Fanny Essler*, and *Maurermeister Ihles Haus*, in the light of the various intellectual and artistic movements prevalent in Germany. It then examines Grove's Canadian writing, dividing it into four thematic groups: the struggle between individual and nature, the attempt to overcome one's sexual passions, the attempt to establish a patriarchal family structure, and the power struggle that underlies social life. The thesis concludes with an analysis of "superhuman" perspectives and qualities in Grove's critique of mankind in *Consider Her Ways* and of his own life in *In Search of Myself*.

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I. Introduction

Frederick Philip Grove is one of the most puzzling Canadian novelists because his works present us with numerous artistic and philosophical discrepancies. Not only are there still many elements of his biography that we do not know, but his literary oeuvre, too, presents us with many questions about the influences that contributed to the shaping of his works. Although we cannot expect an author to make his oeuvre totally coherent, our understanding of him as "source of significations" (Foucault, 118), leads us to expect more coherence than we find in Grove's works.

Consequently, we have to go a step beyond the surface of the literary texts and inquire into the intellectual preoccupations that inform Grove's oeuvre. His philosophical concerns become particularly important in this respect. In the early criticism, the philosophical content in Grove's works was given as much consideration as his realist technique. In the first book-length study of Grove, Desmond Pacey stresses:

> Grove retains, then, his distinctive place in literary history, achieved by the application to the life of a new area of a philosophy born of the long grim story of man's life on earth (134).

In the same year, B.K. Sandwell characterized Grove as "by far the greatest philosophical literary artist to emerge as yet in Canada" (18). Frequently, however, such praise was intended to excuse the artistic shortcomings of Grove's works. The best example of this approach can be found in Edward McCourt's *The Canadian West in Fiction*: "Grove is not a great novelist, for the power to create living people was denied him; but he brought a cultured and philosophic mind to the contemplation of the Western scene" (69).

After Grove's death, the emphasis in the consideration of his works changed. Rather than stress the philosophical aspects of his books, critics were now more concerned with Grove's technical achievement. In his contribution to the *Literary History of Canada*, Desmond Pacey, implying a natural superiority of realistic to romantic literature, gave his praise for Grove a very different basis than he had done twenty years before: "It was prairie writers such as Robert J.C. Stead (1880 - 1959), Martha Ostenso (b. 1900), and above all Frederick Philip Grove (1871 - 1948) who began the systematic transformation of Canadian fiction from romance to realism" (Pacey, "Fiction," 676).

The reassessment of Grove's work as a consequence of Douglas Spettigue's discovery of Grove's German origins has called into question numerous earlier assertions about the author. No longer ready to take anything for granted about Grove, most recent critics either deal with specific aspects of individual novels, or discuss him within a broader framework that allows them to disregard thematic and artistic incongruities.[1] George Woodcock names Grove and Morley Callaghan as "the writers who in retrospect appear to have given in that generation [after World War I] the most authentic fictional expression of Canada and the Canadian consciousness" ("Possessing," 84), but only after having pointed out that they used a modified form of the traditional realist technique:

> Where an important novelist – such as Frederick Philip Grove . . . – has used techniques generally regarded as 'realist,' the realism has almost always turned out to be one of the secondary elements in what is primarily a moral drama . . . which uses fantasy as much as realism to gain its ends (72).

In the most recent general survey, W.J. Keith comes to the conclusion that Grove used realist techniques but that his literary intentions went further:

> While he provides a convincing account of prairie life, his novels transcend the limitations of localized documentary. He is more interested in the psychology of his protagonists (*Literature*, 125). . . . He came to Canada with experience of other artistic traditions and measured himself against achievements in other literatures. His ambitions were large and his horizons broad (127).

But what specifically Grove's ambitions were and what marked the boundaries of his horizons, Keith does not say. Woodcock's vague reference to Grove's dealing with "moral drama" indicates that although critics are aware of a philosophical dimension of Grove's work, nobody has yet given serious attention to this aspect. A general shortcoming of Grove criticism to date is that even though individual works have been analyzed from specific points of view, Grove's complete oeuvre "has not been paid the respect of having a full-scale examination done so that his world view – influences and all – may be shown in a clear and developing form" (Mathews, "Important Version," 242).

My intention in this thesis is to investigate Grove's central philosophical and literary ambitions and horizons. Keith states that Grove's novels "constitute a clear and

---

[1]The best-known examples of such general studies are Dick Harrison, *Unnamed Country: The Struggle for a Canadian Prairie Fiction*, and Laurie Ricou, *Vertical Man/Horizontal World: Man and Landscape in Canadian Prairie Fiction.*

recognizable oeuvre with a discernible progression from the beginning of his career to its end" (*Literature*,126). Unfortunately, Keith does not specify which factors he sees giving coherence to Grove's works. In my view, Grove's oeuvre exhibits a strong concern with the values deriving from the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche – particularly the sublimation of the passions, the superman, and the will to power. In his Canadian novels, Grove showed the consequences that arise for characters whose actions and decisions are compatible with Nietzschean ideals. Grove's works explore the conditions that affect people who try to build an existence in the new North American environment. His position toward Nietzschean values and his eventual development of an alternative approach to life forms, as I intend to demonstrate, the most important factor in Grove's perception of the topics about which he wrote. Grove was not writing plots and characterizations to illustrate Nietzschean philosophy, but, as I intend to show, reading his novels in the light of that philosophy will help us to understand some of his characterizations and plots about which readers have not come to a consensus. We have to keep in mind in this inquiry that Nietzschean philosophy is unsystematic and frequently ambiguous. More importantly, we have to be aware that Frederick Philip Grove was a novelist whose primary concern was his art. Therefore we cannot expect to find many direct cross-references to the philosophy in his novels. Novelistic concerns come first in the works, but the philosophy is an integral part of the novelist's perspective.

Grove himself saw the novelist as the most important influence upon his work. In his essay, "Realism in Literature," he emphasized that "in art the artist is an indispensable medium through which we say things" (*It Needs*, 59). For Grove, the artist is much less the reflector or describer of a world than its creator. Whatever an artist chooses as his subject matter "must be reborn in the soul of the artist" (60). Grove even goes a step further in his insistence upon the central significance of the artist for the creative process when he states,

> By the very fact that he cannot reproduce except what was potentially in him, he is, in the totality of his creation, present to the spectator or reader. . . . He delimits his work by his own personality (61 – 62).

Grove places the artist's mind above the described subject matter. In his perception, the created work expresses the artist's mind. Even though the author's environment is a strong factor in shaping the work of art, the artist's shaping of this reality via his own

creativity is even more significant.

An investigation into the forces that shaped Grove's mind is important also for another reason. In several of his works, most notably *Over Prairie Trails* and *A Search for America*, Grove creates central characters who closely resemble the public persona that he created for himself, inviting his audience to read these works as autobiographical. Since this persona is as much a created fiction as are the characters in the other novels and since the novels also serve to support the image of the persona, Eli Mandel concludes, "Believing the strangest dreams, in search of himself, one could say that Grove's life was created by his own fiction, his novels that – it seems now – literally wrote him into existence" (*Time*, 58). For an understanding of Grove's fictions we have to understand the persona that Grove set between himself and his audience. To do this, we have to investigate the concepts that led Grove to create this particular persona for himself. Robert Kroetsch states,

> Out of the terrible pressures within himself, he creates moral predicaments and explores in violent and new ways the connections between autobiography and the novel, between fiction and reality (11).

An understanding of Grove the person is thus the prerequisite for an understanding of Grove's persona and Grove's creative production. Only if we are able to comprehend "the terrible pressures within himself" which, according to Kroetsch, were the sources for Grove's creativity, will we be able to understand the resulting fictions. We cannot expect to read Grove's mind, but the recurrence of significant patterns of thought throughout his oeuvre indicates the importance of these concepts for his mental constitution.

Throughout most of his career Grove claimed to be more than just a novelist. In lectures, articles, and quasi-autobiographical writings he constantly drew attention to his persona beyond the novels indicating that the novels did not give him sufficient scope to express his intentions. Grove's self-portraits are deliberately deceptive, but they are highly significant and illuminating for an understanding of Grove's self-perception and, furthermore, of the public image of himself he wanted to create in order to make himself believable to a larger audience.

In the largely fictitious *In Search of Myself*, which he allowed to be taken as his autobiography, Grove set himself up as an author who is able and willing to convey specific truths to mankind.

> I could truthfully call my knowledge of the pioneering section of the west of the

> North American continent unique. At a glance I could survey the prairie country from Kansas to Saskatchewan or Alberta; and at a thought I could evaluate, in my own way, of course, the implications of pioneer life. I, the cosmopolitan, had fitted myself to be the spokesman of a race – not necessarily a race in the ethnographic sense; in fact, not at all in that sense; rather in the sense of a stratum of society which cross-sectioned all races, consisting of those who, in no matter what climate, at no matter what time, feel the impulse of starting anew, from the ground up, to fashion a new world which might serve as the breeding-place of a civilization to come. These people, the pioneers, reaffirmed me in my conception of what often takes the form of a tragic experience; the age-old conflict between human desire and the stubborn resistance of nature. Order must arise out of chaos; the wilderness must be tamed. No matter where I looked, then as today, I failed to see that the task of recording that struggle of man with nature had ever adequately been done. . . . To record that struggle seemed to be my task. Perhaps, very likely even, I was foredoomed to failure in my endeavour; in fact, I seemed to see even then that I was bound to fail; but the attempt had to be made (226 – 27).

This acceptance of failure in an extremely ambitious undertaking echoes in the conclusions of his novels. The passage quoted here is important for understanding Grove's oeuvre, since Grove here provides not only an expression of his professed intention but also an elaboration of his method. Rather than considering the pioneers of the Canadian West as ordinary human beings in extraordinary circumstances – which would amount to little more than a variety of the traditional topics of immigration and pioneering – Grove presents the characters of his novels as particular human beings set apart from the others by both experiences and temperament. The passage, which echoes a statement Grove had made in *Settlers of the Marsh* twenty years earlier, indicates that it would be misleading to read Grove's characters only in realistic terms. Although he was concerned with providing a realistic setting for his stories, the passage quoted above makes clear that Grove's characters, in particular his pioneer farmers, are created in order to demonstrate personal insights which are based on his personal "cosmopolitan" experiences. Since he states expressly the he "had fitted [him]self" for this task, he indicates that he alone could convey these highly important truths to his readers, and that the manner he has chosen is the most appropriate one. We know today that the

facts of Grove's life were different. But in 1946, Grove could utilize the lack of information about his background for his purposes. He could expect his audience at the time to accept his mask as his true face and to give credence to his pronouncements.

The same mixture of fact and fiction is the basis of Grove's artistic method. He did use the technique of realistic representation which he had learned in Europe, but not in the almost mimetic manner frequently associated with the term realism and best represented by Balzac's works. Grove was concerned with the representation of the physical reality in which his novels are set, but his characterizations are, as I intend to demonstrate, influenced by his philosophical preoccupations. Consequently it is of the utmost importance to look beyond the realistic exterior of Grove's novels to arrive at the philosophy that informs them. The development of Grove's philosophical position during the forty-five years of his life as a creative writer enables us to understand his oeuvre as a developing whole. Comprehending this whole then allows us to understand individual works as parts of this oeuvre and to gain new insights not available through a different analysis.

Consequently, we shall have to investigate the influences upon Grove's thinking and writing. The attempt to determine the influences upon an author's creative perception therefore has to include not only a consideration of his biographical development but in particular a consideration of those literary and extra-literary concepts which he received and to which he responded creatively. As Karl Robert Mandelkow has pointed out, a writer's evaluations of other writers are significant documents of his self-perception.

> Evaluations by authors, for example of other authors, are part of the essential elements of the history of reception, but they are at the same time almost always also more than pure reception, namely a document of their own self-understanding, open or hidden self-delimitation of their own creativity and their own production, and thus carry over into the field of the aesthetics of performance and production of the respective bearer of the effect.[2]

---

[2]"Urteile von Dichtern z.B. ueber andere Dichter gehoeren zum Kernbestand der Rezeptionsgeschichte, sind jedoch zugleich fast immer auch mehr als blosse Rezeption, naemlich Dokument eigenen Selbstverstaendnisses, offene oder verkappte Selbstabgrenzung eigenen Schaffens und eigener Produktion und spielen damit in den Bereich der Darstellungs- oder Produktionsaesthetik des betreffenden Wirkungstraegers hinueber (94)." (My translation).

A study of Frederick Philip Grove's writings reveals that Friedrich Nietzsche fulfilled such a function for Grove. In his second publication, a review of previously unpublished works of Nietzsche, Greve[3] counted himself among "the totality of his supporters" and stressed the "eminent significance which Nietzsche's philosophy possesses for the life and the development of our intellectual culture or which it is achieving."[4] Over the next forty-five years, Grove referred to Nietzsche in his creative writing as well as in his essays. In *In Search of Myself*, the most important document of Grove's establishment of his public persona, he again emphasized his knowledge of Nietzsche's writings (92, 166–67) and referred to them as "books of the greatest importance" (166). Anthony Riley has concluded that Grove not only knew Nietzsche's theories but "continued to adhere to some of Nietzsche's vitalistic doctrines even in Canada" ("Case,"42). This conclusion is too general – this thesis is intended to demonstrate how Grove's position toward Nietzschean values changed over the years – but nevertheless points in the right direction.

Nietzsche's was not the only influence upon Grove, but it certainly was the most important one. All of Grove's writings, with the exception of the early verse drama *Helena und Damon*, exhibit Nietzschean influences and gain much from a Nietzschean interpretation. In this thesis, I shall divide Grove's oeuvre into four thematic groups, each dealing with the protagonists' attempt to increase their power, each presenting a wider social focus than the former. In chapter four, I shall analyze *Over Prairie Trails* and *Settlers of the Marsh*, in which Grove discussed the possibilities of a person who wants to establish his physical presence in the face of the natural forces of the prairie. In *Settlers of the Marsh* and *The Yoke of Life*, discussed in chapter five, Grove analyzed the protagonists' attempts to gain power over themselves, particularly over their passions. In the third group, consisting of *Our Daily Bread*, *Fruits of the Earth*, and *Two Generations*, Grove considered the workings of the family from the point of view of patriarchal power. This theme shall be the topic of my sixth chapter. In chapter seven, I shall discuss

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[3]Anyone concerned with both the German and the Canadian phases of Grove's career is faced with the problem ofthe author's name since he himself used more than one. Since he lived and published under the name Felix Paul Greve up to 1909, I shall use that name where that period is concerned. For discussions of his activities in North America, I shall use the name by which he is better known, Frederick Philip Grove.

[4] "Die Gesammtheit seiner Anhaenger;" "die eminente Bedeutung, die Nietzsches Philosophie fuer das Leben und die Entwicklung der Geisteskultur besitzt oder sich erringt" (6). (My translation).

Grove's portrait of the workings of society as a whole, interpreting it as a system of various centers of power that corresponds to Nietzsche's perspectivism. Grove dealt with this theme in *Fruits of the Earth* and *The Master of the Mill.* In his last published novel, *Consider Her Ways*, Grove reviewed possibilities and limits of the human race from a point of view comparable to that of the ultimate Nietzschean objective, the superman.

In the following chapters we shall see that if we read Grove's works in the light of Nietzschean philosophy, we arrive at insights into Grove's artistic and philosophical perceptions that go further than previous attempts. We shall not only discover a coherence in Grove's oeuvre, but we shall also understand better the manner in which his thematic preoccupations developed. Furthermore, understanding these philosophical aspects of Grove's novels will enable us to see that his works have more depth than is apparent from his sometimes awkward plots and his cumbersome style. Thus we will be able to do more justice to an important figure in Canadian literary history the value of whose works has frequently been disputed.

Nietzschean concepts are evident throughout Grove's fiction. We see them in individual works but gain a much better understanding of their importance if we consider Grove's oeuvre as a whole. Nietzschean concepts of power and self-determination form a recurrent pattern in Grove's works and help us to understand the protagonists and their actions better. Nietzsche is important also for another aspect of Grove's novels. Many of Grove's protagonists are engaged in existentialist inquiries into the meaning of life and their own place in the world. We can trace Existentialism back to Nietzsche[5] and see how Nietzschean ideas contribute to several aspects of Grove's fiction.

Focussing on the Nietzschean aspects of Grove's works is, perhaps, not an approach of whose applicability we are immediately aware. After all, direct references to Nietzsche are rare in Grove's writing. We shall see, however, that Grove's cultural background contributed significantly to his serious interest in Nietzschean philosophy.

---

[5]In the introduction to his anthology of existentialist writings Walter Kaufmann states: "In the story of existentialism, Nietzsche occupies a central place: Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre are unthinkable without him, and the conclusion of Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus* sounds like a distant echo of Nietzsche. Camus has also written at length about Nietzsche. . . . Existentialism suggests only a single facet of Nietzsche's multifarious influence, and to call him an existentialist means in all likelihood an insufficient appreciation of his full significance. . . . Existentialism without Nietzsche would be almost like Thomism without Aristotle; but to call Nietzsche an existentialist is a little like calling Aristotle a Thomist" (21 - 22).

Grove did not discuss Nietzsche expressly in his fiction or his correspondence, but the Nietzschean concepts which he had encountered during his formative years in Germany continued to influence his perception of the world and the manner in which he portrayed this reality – possibly to a larger extent than he was aware of himself.

Reading Grove's works in the light of Nietzschean philosophy may appear somewhat unusual considering the traditional Grove criticism. We shall see, however, that Grove's intellectual and artistic background justifies as well as requires the inclusion of Nietzschean values in our analysis of his fiction. Douglas Spettigue's discovery of Grove's German roots has shown that Grove did not come to Canada as an artistic novice. He was over thirty years old and had for about ten years been seriously involved in the artistic and intellectual developments in Central Europe. His German writings give ample evidence that Grove was steeped in the age's philosophical preoccupations; his activity as a translator educated him in the literary trends prevalent at the time.

This thesis will argue that a considerable part of Grove's Canadian works show Nietzschean elements comparable to those in the German writings. Novels such as *Settlers of the Marsh* and *Fruits of the Earth* deal with Canadian materials, but we shall see that Grove's depiction of these materials is strongly colored by the Nietzschean concepts that he had internalized in Germany. As a result of this study, we shall see that Grove's whole œuvre – German works as well as Canadian – forms a developing whole which we can better understand in the light of Nietzschean values.

To establish the extent of Nietzsche's importance for Grove, it is necessary to consider the philosophical concerns of Grove's age. Born in 1879, Felix Paul Greve[6] witnessed a society that was changing from a moderate and traditional organization into one of rapid industrialization and aggressive economic and political expansionism accompanied by a serious undermining of traditional social and cultural values. These experiences contrasted sharply with the intellectual environment of his school whose purpose was to prepare its students to enter university. The educational ideal prevalent in German secondary schools at the time was a Humboldtian humanism which was inspired by an idealized image of classical Antiquity, particularly Greece. A knowledge of Latin, Greek, and classical philosophy was the indispensable prerequisite for enrolment in university, where the students were supposed to develop into members of an elite that

[6]The following sketch is based largely on Douglas O. Spettigue, *FPG: The European Years*.

would eventually lead German intellectual life back to the heights of antique Greece. Germany's expanding political and economic force was supposed to provide the material basis for this endeavor.

Greve's classically-oriented education heightened his awareness of the discrepancy between the beauty of the Hellenistic ideal and the ugliness of the physical reality which was more than evident. In many countries, most notably France, Britain, and Germany, artists withdrew into a self-created realm of beauty and subscribed to a lifestyle devoted exclusively to beauty, thus clashing frequently with the norms of that society to which they were opposed. "Art for art's sake" and decadent aestheticism basically rejected contemporary society's capacity and right to set artistic and social norms.

The same scorn for the weaknesses of their contemporaries and the resulting shortcomings of society led others to combine their rejection of the contemporary situation with a longing for a better state of affairs which they hoped could be brought about by a "higher" type of human being. This line of thought was expressed not only by creative artists, but also by serious and popular philosophers. Leo Berg could write a monograph, *Der Uebermensch in der modernen Litteratur [The Superman in Modern Literature]* as early as 1897, and Friedrich Nietzsche's call for a superman became the most widely read - and possibly least understood - philosophy of the decades after 1890.

Friedrich Nietzsche's importance for the development of modern thought can hardly be overestimated. As Walter Kaufmann states, "Nietzsche, more than any other philosopher of the past hundred years, represents a major historical event" (*Nietzsche*, xiii). Michael Hamburger has aptly summarized the significance of Nietzsche's thought for contemporary life:

> In a sense Nietzsche is with us whether we read him or not. It is no exaggeration to say that he anticipated almost every distinct trend in twentieth-century thought, including not only the religions of Art, on the one hand, Life on the other, but depth psychology, phenomenalism and existentialism, logical positivism and linguistic analysis. Indeed, only Nietzsche's demolition of metaphysics marks the place where all these trends originated before their divergence (23).

Nietzsche's immediate impact is difficult to measure, but Jens Malte Fischer asserts that "one can choose among thousands of quotes to characterize Nietzsche's influence in the Nineties and to show that Nietzsche was read also outside of the group of Nietzsche

disciples" (38).[7] As a member of Germany's intelligentsia, Greve was exposed to the Nietzsche vogue that swept over Germany and several other countries at the turn of the century, and the tone and outlook of his review of the *Nachgelassene Werke* indicate that Greve took more than a detached scholarly interest in the philosopher. The decadent aestheticism of the age became a part of Greve's thought through his private reading outside of the university requirements. Spettigue concludes that Greve's private reading was to a large extent responsible for the image he developed of himself:

> On his own he was reading the English Decadents – Dowson, Beardsley and above all, Oscar Wilde.
>
> Not only reading them but taking them deeply to heart. There is ample evidence that Felix was modelling his own life on certain characteristics of the Decadents. . . . Greve had a noticeably reflected personality, that is, he tended to take his colours from the figures he admired (*European Years*, 51).

In this situation it is not surprising that Greve was attracted to the circle of Neo–Romantic poets who had gathered around Stefan George. The George movement, in many respects the German counterpart to the British Decadents, combined its efforts to renew German poetry with an elitism that sought its ideological justification in Nietzsche. Greve tried to join the Georgeans during 1902, but he was never fully admitted into the circle of the "elect." His first two books, the poetry collection *Wanderungen* and the verse drama *Helena und Damon*, were, however, written in accord with the aesthetics promoted by George. The technical achievements of George's school of poetry are of minor importance for Greve, who published almost exclusively prose after 1902, but George's interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy was definitely important for Greve, who would criticize it harshly in his *roman a clef*, *Fanny Essler*. The same novel also saw the first appearance in prose of what was to become one of Grove's most recognizable literary creations. Friedrich Karl Reelen, to a certain extent a hypothetical self-portrait, is the first in a long line of characters in Grove's novels who stand out from among their neighbors in several respects.

After Greve disappeared from Germany and reappeared in Canada in 1912 as Frederick Philip Grove, he revised his public biography radically. But he did not – and

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[7]"Man kann zwischen Tausenden von Zitaten waehlen, um die Wirkung Nietzsches in den neunziger Jahren zu charakterisieren . . . [und] zu zeigen, dass Nietzsche auch ausserhalb der Nietzsche–Juengerschaft rezipiert wurde" (My translation).

most likely could not – revise his way of thinking and of expressing his thought in writing. Grove was most concerned with the chances for success in modern Canada of very powerful and strong-willed characters. This theme became so important in Grove's writing that E.D. Blodgett could ask:

> How is it possible to think 'Grove' and not think of other names, casual metonymies perhaps, of Niels Lindstedt, Len Sterner, Abe Spalding, John Elliot, Ralph Patterson, Samuel and Edmund Clark, the allusively fictional Phil Branden, and other men haunting the margins of Grove's imagination (112).

Douglas Spettigue has concisely summarized the relation of Grove's central characters to their environment and points toward the philosophical basis of their creation. According to Spettigue, Grove's novels focus on

> the presence of the superior protagonist who stands above the settlers of his district like an island out of the sea . . . . [H]e seems to be in the tradition of Nietzsche and Carlyle and much Renaissance tragedy. He is a superior being by virtue of his character, whether as dreamer or man of action. The essence of that character must be the superior will (*Grove*, 104).

My reading of Grove's novels leads me to agree that Nietzsche was a central influence on the creation of these characters, and that the "superior will" that Spettigue sees is in fact the "will to power" of Nietzschean philosophy.

In his book on Grove's *European Years*, Spettigue expands the list of significant influences:

> Because Felix himself, in his *Oscar Wilde* pamphlet of 1903, traces a line of descent through Wilde and the English Decadents to the French Symbolistes and thence to Germany, so linking Gide and George, we cannot go far wrong in giving those three men some prominence in his story. The danger is more likely to lie in underestimating than in exaggerating their influence (51).

During the time that Grove was associated with them, both George and Gide were seriously concerned with Nietzschean ideals. Oscar Wilde had very little, if any, knowledge of Nietzsche, but he shared with the German philosopher a strong distaste for the existing society and arrived at some conclusions similar to Nietzsche's, although his origins and intentions were very different.[8] The influence of these three authors is clearly

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[8]This parallel is particularly evident in both authors' emphasis upon individualism. Rodney Shewan claims: "Had Wilde known of Nietzsche, he would have

prominent in Grove's German writing, but less so in his North American works. In my reading, Wilde, George, and Gide nevertheless influenced Grove's Canadian works by having confronted him in their own works with the same problems that Nietzsche was concerned with, particularly that of the idealist living in a materialist environment. By concentrating upon the Nietzschean element, we shall understand not only the parallels, but also the differences in Grove's writing from the authors Spettigue lists.

Consequently, I will undertake to discuss Grove's novels, and in particular the central characters he portrays, in the light of Nietzschean philosophy. As a result of this investigation I hope to determine the degree to which Grove's writing was influenced by Nietzsche. Grove did not create Nietzschean characters, but his protagonists frequently engage in philosophical questions about their existence which resemble Nietzschean inquiries. Grove's novels also exhibit a preoccupation with concepts which match Nietzschean concerns. The most notable of these concerns are the desire for control over the passions, the quest for power over the human and physical environment, and the determination to assert the will to power without considering the consequences for other people. Grove's protagonists are, however, markedly less capable of realizing their ambitions than Nietzsche had thought possible for any determined human being. The existence of these concepts in Grove's fiction suggests very strongly the significance of Nietzschean ideas for Grove's creative work. As a further consequence of my research, I hope to identify as misleading Margaret Stobie's claim that "nineteenth-century German educational philosophy [in particular the concepts of Friedrich Froebel] . . . was the relevant core of Grove's training and thinking, and, to a large degree, . . . determined the themes of his writing" (*Grove*, 17). German educational philosophy is not irrelevant for Grove. He was acquainted with it, and it contributed to his perception of the world. Froebel's influence on Grove is, however, quite different from that of other philosophers

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[8](cont'd) sympathized with his pursuit of the theme of the anti-political individual who seeks self-perfection far from the modern world" (106). Wilde's most explicit statements about such individualist freedom can be found in "The Soul of Man under Socialism," where he states: "For the full development of life to its highest mode of perfection, something more is needed. What is needed is individualism. . . . At present, . . . a great many people are enabled to develop a certain very limited amount of Individualism. . . . These are the poets, the philosophers, the men of science, the men of culture – in a word, the real men, the men who have realized themselves" (1080). "Art is the most intense mood of Individualism that the world has known. I am inclined to say that it is the only real mood of Individualism that the world has known" (1090).

such as Nietzsche, Plato, Bergson, and Spengler. Grove read educational philosophy while he was a schoolteacher in Manitoba, presumably to gain a background in educational theory.[9] The Nietzschean influence on Grove differs from those mentioned here in several respects. Most importantly, it is the earliest philosophical influence. It dates back to about 1900, whereas Grove's reading of Froebel, Bergson, and Spengler took place only after he came to Canada. Nietzschean philosophy is also the only one significant in all of Grove's novels, while the concepts of Plato, Bergson, and Spengler only contributed to individual works, most notably *The Yoke of Life* (Plato) and *The Master of the Mill* (Bergson and Spengler). Froebel's concepts are not prominent in Grove's fiction at all.

The European basis that I see underlying Grove's philosophical thought raises the question whether it is useful to discuss Grove on the same basis as his Canadian contemporaries, such as Robert J.C. Stead, Martha Ostenso, or Morley Callaghan, who wrote from very different intellectual backgrounds. When Margaret Atwood states that prairie literature is populated by "a good many will-driven patriarchs, and one of the best places to look for them is in the novels of Frederick Philip Grove" (122), she implies that Grove's central characters are essentially similar to other authors' patriarchal characters. A consideration of the Nietzschean elements of novels such as *Our Daily Bread* or *Fruits of the Earth*, however, makes clear that characters such as John Elliot or Abe Spalding have no more than a superficial similarity to a character such as Caleb Gare in Martha Ostenso's *Wild Geese* who is the most ready object of comparison.

Finally, I hope that this analysis will contribute to a view of Frederick Philip Grove as an author with a very complex background which provided him with a literary technique as well as with a philosophical point of view. So far, most critics have paid far more attention to the technique than to the philosophy. My reading of Grove leads me to conclude that the unsatisfying artistic aspects of his works which many critics have lamented can, to a considerable extent, be attributed to the various philosophical influences on his perception. We shall see that Grove could not reconcile those elements of his fiction that exhibit parallels to Nietzschean philosophy with the kind of human satisfaction which his characters strive for. The discrepancy between these poles – Nietzschean success and human fulfilment – becomes more pronounced in Grove's writing the more clearly Grove defines human fulfilment in his later novels. Even though Grove

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[9]When Grove started teaching in 1912, he had no training as a teacher whatsoever.

pronounces humanitarian ideals in his later works much more clearly than in the earlier writing, the Nietzschean influence is still there. Grove was not using his novels to discuss Nietzschean philosophy or even answer some of its questions, but if we consider the Nietzschean element of his novels, we shall resolve some of the questions we have about his writing and gain a better understanding of his oeuvre. Taking the various influences, particularly that of Nietzsche, into consideration, we can arrive at an evaluation of Grove's work that does more justice to the author than criticism concentrating only on his artistic shortcomings. I hope that my dissertation will help to establish Frederick Philip Grove as a novelist with serious philosophical concerns whose pronouncements upon Canadian society and the human race in general have largely been neglected. This approach adds another facet to our understanding of this very complex author and his work.

II. Nietzschean Philosophy and its Influence on Modern Literature

Friedrich Nietzsche can be considered the most influential popular philosopher to emerge in Germany during the last century. He encountered serious difficulties in finding publishers for his books, and saw those that were published met by a largely indifferent audience. Nietzsche thus essentially remained obscure during most of his active life. His fame began only in 1888, just before his mental collapse, when Georg Brandes began giving lectures on Nietzsche in Copenhagen. "Now Nietzsche's fame began to spread like wildfire" (Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 4). After Brandes had praised Nietzsche's works in the *Deutsche Rundschau* in 1890, the public reception in Germany grew "into immeasurable dimensions" ("ins Unermessliche;" Fischer, 39). The German novelist Gottfried Benn summarized Nietzsche's significance in retrospect as fundamental.

> Essentially, everything that my generation discussed, dissected mentally, one could say: suffered from, one could also say: talked to death – all of that had already expressed and exhausted itself in Nietzsche, had found its definite formulation, everything else was exegesis. . . . He is, as becomes more and more obvious, the far-reaching giant of the post-Goethe era. . . . I could add that for my generation he was the earthquake of the era.[1]

The main reason for Nietzsche's popularity with the generation of those who were born between 1860 and 1890, to which Felix Paul Greve belonged, was that Nietzsche addressed in his works the prominent issues of an age that could no longer rely on the religious and philosophical concepts which had formed the spiritual and intellectual basis of previous ages. Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy, especially if reduced to a few popular key terms – even though they can be highly distortive of the philosophy as a whole if taken out of context – seemed to provide the sought-for impulses and answers to elementary questions.

A complete delineation and analysis of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy cannot be the task of this dissertation. But a short summary of its central elements, in particular definitions of those terms that were taken up in public discussion early in this century,

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[1] "Eigentlich hat alles, was meine Generation diskutierte, innerlich sich auseinanderdachte, man kann sagen: erlitt, man kann auch sagen: breittrat – alles das hatte sich bereits bei Nietzsche ausgesprochen und erschoepft, definitive Formulierung gefunden, alles Weitere was Exegese. . . . Er ist, wie sich immer deutlicher zeigt, der weitreichende Gigant der nachgoethischen Epoche. . . . Ich koennte hinzufuegen, fuer meine Generation war er das Erdbeben der Epoche" (1046 – 47). (My translation)

seems nevertheless necessary. To establish a basis for my use of Nietzschean philosophy, I will define his four most important concepts: the eternal recurrence, the superman, the overcoming of the passions, and the will to power. These four concepts are interrelated and thus not separable without distortion, yet it seems preferable to define them separately in order to make them more accessible.[2]

The Eternal Recurrence

The eternal recurrence, the core of Nietzsche's metaphysics, is a radical departure from traditionally established concepts of religion and philosophy. The basic assumption that underlies all of Nietzsche's thought is the idea that God is dead. This idea was put forth most clearly in section 125 of *Die froehliche Wissenschaft* where Nietzsche has a "madman" proclaim:

> Where is God gone? he called out. I will tell you! *We have killed him*, – you and I! We are all his murderers! . . . God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him! How shall we console ourselves, the most murderous of all murderers? The holiest and the mightiest that the world has hitherto possessed, has bled to death under our knife, – who will wipe the blood from us? . . . Is not the magnitude of this deed too great for us? Shall we not ourselves have to become Gods, merely to seem worthy of it? There never was a greater event, – and on account of it, all who are born after us belong to a higher history than any history hitherto! (*Wisdom*, 167 – 68).[3]

The people to whom the "madman" speaks, and who are also Nietzsche's audience, have

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[2]On the following pages I will not attempt a scholarly discussion of Nietzschean philosophy. Such an undertaking would not only exceed the limits of this thesis, but would also be inappropriate to the topic itself. I am concerned with the popular reception of Nietzsche by creative artists who neither were nor attempted to become scholars of philosophy. They generally read and understood Nietzsche in a very simplified manner which would influence their writings. The simplifications on the following pages are mine, but they are intended to reflect those of the artists with whose work I am concerned.

[3]"Wohin ist Gott? rief er, ich will es euch sagen! *Wir haben ihn getoedtet* – ihr und ich! Wir alle sind seine Moerder! . . . Gott ist todt! Gott bleibt todt! Und wir haben ihn getoedtet! Wie troesten wir uns, die Moerder aller Moerder? Das Heiligste und Maechtigste, was die Welt bisher besass, es ist unter unseren Messern verblutet, – wer wischt dieses Blut von uns ab? . . . Ist nicht die Groesse dieser That zu gross fuer uns? Muessen wir nicht selber zu Goettern werden, um nur ihrer wuerdig zu erscheinen? Es gab nie eine groessere That – und wer nur immer nach uns geboren wird, gehoert um dieser That willen in eine hoehere Geschichte, als alle Geschichte bisher war!" (12: 156 – 57).

killed God by destroying their faith in Him. The radically changed circumstances of life and theories such as Darwin's, which make possible an explanation of the universe without a divine power behind it, created a situation in which Nietzsche's contemporaries undermined the basic elements that made a belief in God possible. The "madman" goes on to say that his audience is not yet aware of the death of God but that it has occurred nevertheless. Consequently it is of the highest importance that people become aware of this development and rearrange their lives accordingly. This is essential, Nietzsche argues, because there no longer is a force that controls the physical development of the universe, and there no longer is an absolute moral authority according to whose norms and values human beings are to behave.

Since the universe still exists, it must depend on a force totally independent of God. We can observe that the world changes constantly. Since this principle has not been implemented by God and no other reason for its existence is imaginable, change has to be an integral part of the universe and the central force informing it. Thus the world is not a temporary function of God, but God a temporary function of the world, created and survived by it. Reasoning that God does not end the world leads Nietzsche to the conclusion that He cannot have begun it either. Since there is no other force conceivable that could have created the world, the universe must have existed forever, without a beginning, changing constantly.

Since the world has been changing continually throughout its existence, Nietzsche concludes, "If the universe had a goal, that goal would have been reached by now. If any sort of unforeseen final state existed, that state would also have been reached" (*Will*, 2: 425).[4] Thus Nietzsche draws the logical conclusion that the world will change forever, into all eternity. Since the elements and the space of the universe are limited, eventually all possible configurations of the world will have occurred. Since the world does not end, configurations will repeat themselves forever, and Nietzsche arrives at "a circular movement of absolutely identical series. . . : the universe is thus shown to be a circular movement which has already repeated itself an infinite number of times, and which plays its game for all eternity" (*Will*, 2: 430).[5] This means that everything that occurs has

[4]"Haette die Welt ein Ziel, so muesste es erreicht sein. Gaebe es fuer sie einen unbeabsichtigten Endzustand, so muesste er ebenfalls erreicht sein" (19: 369).
[5]"Ein Kreislauf von absolut identischen Reihen. . . : die Welt als Kreislauf, der sich unendlich oft bereits wiederholt hat und der sein Spiel in infinitum spielt" (19: 373).

already occurred an indefinite number of times and will repeat an unlimited number of times. The number of possible configurations is, however, so large that none will recur during humanly imaginable time.[6]

The concept of the eternal recurrence is so far removed from nineteenth-century Christian thought and experience and so difficult to appreciate that most of Nietzsche's readers chose to ignore or at least neglect this aspect. Thus they reduce the other three concepts to the physical existence in the here and now, a mode of thinking prominent in an age dominated by Darwinist/naturalist concepts. This practise distorts Nietzsche's philosophy considerably, yet still allows a coherent view of the other three concepts.

Grove rejected the concept of the eternal recurrence explicitly in one of his essays. The eternal recurrence had never been included into his creative works, but that cannot be taken as evidence since actual recurrence supposedly takes place in time spans far beyond human imagination and certainly beyond those limits imposed by the aesthetics of a non-fantastic literature. Grove did, however, reject the idea of an eternal recurrence very consciously:

> There have been proposed systems of philosophy and religion designed to place our present conduct under the greatest restraints imaginable. . . . Such systems were those of an eternal life to come which hinges upon man's pinpoint existence in the present world, and those of an eternal repetition of all things in which a life once lives [*sic*] has to be repeated an infinite number of times. Both systems to me seem utterly unfair because they presuppose logical absurdities: the conflict between free will and predestination: and indeed, they have produced nothing else but gloom ("Rebels," 80).

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[6]The concept of the eternal recurrence is strongly disputed in scholarly discussion, particularly since Nietzsche did not complete his work and left many contradictions and inconsistencies unresolved. For further information see M.C. Sterling, "Recent Discussions of Eternal Recurrence: Some Critical Comments," *Nietzsche-Studien* 6 (1977): 261 - 91; Bernd Magnus, *Nietzsche's Existential Imperative*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978; Joe Krueger, "Nietzschean Recurrence as a Cosmological Hypothesis," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 16 (1978): 435 - 44; Guenter Abel, "Nietzsche contra Selbsterhaltung: Steigerung der Macht und ewige Wiederkehr," *Nietzsche-Studien* 10/11 (1981/82): 367 - 407; Robin Small, "Boscovich Contra Nietzsche," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 46 (1986): 419 - 35; Thomas A. Long, "Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence - Yet Again," *Nietzsche-Studien* 16 (1987): 437 - 43. The definition given here shall suffice since the eternal recurrence was generally ignored by the authors discussed in this thesis.

The eternal recurrence has far-reaching consequences for the way in which people should live their lives. Nietzsche points this out when he has a "demon" declare:

> This life, as thou livest it at present, and hast lived it, thou must live it once more, and also innumerable times; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and every sigh, and all the unspeakably small and great in thy life must come to thee again, and all in the same series and sequence (*Wisdom*, 270).[7]

Since every individual will have to relive his or her life an unlimited number of times, this life should be one he or she would want to repeat, and even look forward to re-living. According to Nietzsche, this can be achieved only if a human being raises it above the ordinary human level.

The Superman

A human life would not be worthy of eternal repetition; a superhuman life would be. The concept of the superman is the most popular but also the most frequently misunderstood element of Nietzsche's philosophy. The concept has its first and most comprehensive expression in *Also Sprach Zarathustra* which is generally considered the most important of Nietzsche's published works because with this book "Nietzsche's philosophic 'development' is completed" (Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 207); his later books are essentially expansions and reworkings of concepts put forth here. The narrator of the book is not the Persian prophet but rather Nietzsche himself who had also withdrawn from the world and pondered the consequences of the death of God. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explained why he chose Zarathustra as his spokesman:

> Zarathustra was the first to see in the struggle between good and evil the essential wheel in the working of things. The translation of morality into the realm of metaphysics, as force, cause, and end-in-itself, is his work. . . . Zarathustra created this most portentous of all errors, – morality; therefore he must be the first to expose it. . . . The overcoming of morality by itself, through truthfulness, the moralist's overcoming of himself in his opposite – in

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[7]"Dieses Leben, wie du es jetzt lebst und gelebt hast, wirst du noch einmal und noch unzaehlige Male leben muessen; und es wird nichts Neues daran sein, sondern jeder Schmerz und jede Lust und jeder Gedanke und Seufzer und alles unsaeglich Kleine und Grosse deines Lebens muss dir wiederkommen, und Alles in derselben Reihe und Folge" (12: 253 – 54).

me – that is what the name Zarathustra means in my mouth (*Ecce Homo*, 133–34)[8]

The death of God, which Nietzsche had proclaimed in *Die froehliche Wissenschaft*, which immediately preceded *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, has resulted in the loss of all meaning and moral values which had been derived from a divine authority. Consequently men have to become godlike and give meaning to their lives themselves. To this godlike being Nietzsche gives the name superman. Zarathustra's task is to show his fellow-beings the path to the superhuman state. This is evident already from the book's prologue.

> *I teach you the Superman*. Man is something that should be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?
>
> All creatures hitherto have created something beyond themselves and do you want to be the ebb of this great tide, and return to the animals rather than overcome man? . . .
>
> You have made your way from worm to man, and much in you is still worm. Once you were apes, and even now man is more of an ape than any ape. . . .
>
> Behold, I teach you the Superman.
>
> The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman *shall be* the meaning of the earth!
>
> I entreat you, my brothers, *remain true to the earth*, and do not believe those who speak to you of superterrestrial hopes! (*Zarathustra*, 41 – 42).[9]

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[8]"Zarathustra hat zuerst im Kampf des Guten und des Boesen das eigentliche Rad im Getriebe der Dinge gesehen, – die Uebersetzung der Moral in's Metaphysische, als Kraft, Ursache, Zweck an sich ist *sein* Werk. . . . Zarathustra *schuf* diesen verhaengnisvollsten Irrtum, die Moral: folglich muss er auch der Erste sein, der ihn *erkennt*. . . . Die Selbstueberwindung der Moral aus Wahrhaftigkeit, die Selbstueberwindung des Moralisten in seinen Gegensatz – in *mich* – das bedeutet in meinem Munde der Name Zarathustra" (21: 278).

[9] "*Ich lehre euch den Uebermenschen*. Der Mensch ist Etwas, das ueberwunden werden soll. Was habt ihr getan, ihn zu ueberwinden? Alle Wesen bisher schufen Etwas ueber sich hinaus: und ihr wollt die Ebbe dieser grossen Fluth sein und lieber noch zum Thiere zurueckgehn, als den Menschen ueberwinden? . . . Ihr habt den Weg vom Wurme zum Menschen gemacht, und Vieles ist in euch noch Wurm. Einst wart ihr Affen, und auch jetzt noch ist der Mensch mehr Affe, als irgend ein Affe. . . . Seht, ich lehre euch den Uebermenschen! Der Uebermensch ist der Sinn der Erde. Euer Wille sage: der Uebermensch *sein* der Sinn der Erde. Ich beschwoere euch, meine Brueder, *bleibt der Erde treu* und glaubt denen nicht, welche euch von ueberirdischen Hoffnungen reden!"(13: 8 – 9).

This passage is central for the understanding of the concept of the superman; yet, it is also very controversial because it not only proclaims the basis for Nietzsche's philosophical discourse but at the same time refutes the idea of a Darwinian kind of superman in essentially Darwinian terms. The similarity of terms and the temporal closeness of these two interpretations of existence led to frequent Darwinist misreadings of Nietzsche. He characterized those who interpreted the superman as a Darwinian concept as "learned cattle" (*Ecce Homo*, 58),[10] and argued that the distinction between superman and man is as great as that between man and ape. A superman is a totally different species from man, yet man can, under certain circumstances, develop into a superman.

The essential distinction between man and superman is that men are at the mercy of forces outside of themselves for the achievement of completeness and happiness, whereas the superman is not controlled by anything outside of himself since he has overcome his dependence upon his passions. This self-sufficiency culminates in his ability to give meaning to his own life according to his own – for him indisputable – interests and to determine the moral values according to which he lives his life. This capacity, which had formerly been ascribed to God, makes the superman the master of his existence, and thus godlike.

The superhuman existence is the best possible one, since it realizes the potential inherent in a person. Consequently the superhuman state of being is the only one whose eternal repetition is desirable. Unfortunately, there are no direct examples of superman after whom human beings could mould their striving: "There has never yet been a Superman. I have seen them both naked, the greatest and the smallest man. They are still all-too-similar to one another. Truly, I found even the greatest man – all-too-human!" (*Zarathustra*, 117)[11] This "never" is, however, limited to the perspective of Zarathustra who exists only in a restricted period of time. It only means that there have not been any supermen in this particular configuration of the elements in the world,

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[10] "Gelehrtes Hornvieh" (21: 214). Nietzsche's correction did not, however, have an immediate effect. Written in late 1888, immediately before Nietzsche's collapse, *Ecce Homo* remained unpublished until 1908, by which time a Darwinist interpretation of the superman had become a firm part of the popular perception of Nietzsche's philosophy.

[11] "Niemals noch gab es einen Uebermenschen. Nackt sah ich beide, den groessten und den kleinsten Menschen: – Allzuaehnlich sind sie noch einander. Wahrlich, auch den Groessten fand ich – allzumenschlich!" (13: 118).

which proves that they are not essential for the existence of the world as such. There may have been supermen in different phases of the world's existence, and Nietzsche has to declare possible the existence of supermen in former times, since all configurations have already occurred. The more time passes, the more imminent the coming of the superman becomes and the more he becomes the focus of intellectual attention.

The restriction Nietzsche accepts is that there has not yet been a superman in human history. He does, however, speak of the existence of an elite of a "higher type" whose members have lived at isolated points in history.

> Mankind does *not* represent a development towards a better, stronger, or higher type in the sense in which this is supposed to occur to-day. . . . On the other hand isolated and individual cases are continually succeeding in different places on earth, as the outcome of the most different cultures, and in these a *higher type* certainly manifests itself: something which by the side of mankind in general represents a kind of superman. Such lucky strokes of great success have always been possible and will perhaps always be possible (*Antichrist* , 129).[12]

The best-known examples of this "higher type" whom Nietzsche mentions are Goethe, Socrates, Caesar, and Napoleon (c. f. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, 313 - 16). A member of this "higher type" has apparently made considerable progress toward reaching the superhuman state but has still fallen short of the goal. Yet these people can serve as examples for those who come after them. They demonstrate that it is possible to achieve a comparatively higher state of existence, and their shortcomings can point out the obstacles which their successors may know how to overcome.

The Overcoming of the Passions

The first step for a person who wants to achieve the superhuman state of existence is his freeing himself from the domination which his passions have over him,

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[12]"Die Menschheit stellt *nicht* eine Entwicklung zum Besseren oder Staerkeren oder Hoeheren dar in der Weise, wie dies heute geglaubt wird. . . . In einem anderen Sinne giebt es ein fortwaehrendes Gelingen einzelner Faelle an den verschiedensten Stellen der Erde und aus den verschiedensten Culturen heraus, mit denen in der That sich ein *hoeherer Typus* darstellt: etwas, das im Verhaeltnis zur Gesammt-Menschheit eine Art Uebermensch ist. Solche Gluecksfaelle des grossen Gelingens waren immer moeglich und werden vielleicht immer moeglich sein" (17: 172 - 73).

since the control over one's passions is essential for the control over one's life. Instead of giving in to one's passions, one has to learn how to use them for one's benefit.

Everybody is capable of overcoming and sublimating his passions. In a section of *Morgenroete* Nietzsche has listed the six methods of overcoming and sublimation that he deems feasible:

> Shunning the opportunities, regulating the impulse, bringing about satiety and disgust in the impulse, associating a painful idea (such as that of discredit, disgust, or offended pride), then the dislocation of one's forces, and finally general debility and exhaustion: these are the six methods (*Dawn*, 108).[13]

Nietzsche qualifies the sixth method as of dubious value because a weakening of the entire self also includes a weakening of its positive aspects. His discussion of the fifth method makes it appear the most promising:

> We may bring about a dislocation of our powers by imposing upon ourselves a particularly difficult and fatiguing task, or by deliberately submitting to some new charm and pleasure in order thus to turn our thoughts and physical powers into other channels. It comes to the same thing if we temporarily favour another impulse by affording it numerous opportunities of gratification, and thus rendering it the squanderer of the power which would otherwise be comandeered, so to speak, by the tyrannical impulse (*Dawn*, 107 - 08).[14]

It is important to note that the objective of such an overcoming is not the destruction of a given passion. Even though the object of a passion may be negative for the person's development, the passion itself nevertheless constitutes energy that may be put to positive use. Consequently Nietzsche points out the potential of a sublimated passion.

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[13]"Den Anlaessen ausweichen, Regel in den Trieb hineinpflanzen, Uebersaettigung und Ekel an ihm erzeugen und die Association eines quaelenden Gedankens (wie den der Schande, der boesen Folgen oder des beleidigten Stolzes) zu Stande bringen, sodann die Dislocation der Kraefte und endlich die allgemeine Schwaechung und Erschoepfung - das sind die sechs Methoden" (10: 98 - 99).

[14]"Man nimmt eine Dislocation seiner Kraftmengen vor, indem man sich irgend eine besonders schwere und anstrengende Arbeit auferlegt oder sich absichtlich einem neuen Reize oder Vergnuegen unterwirft und dergestalt Gedanken und physisches Kraeftespiel in andere Bahnen lenkt. Eben darauf laeuft es auch hinaus, wenn man einen anderen Trieb zeitwilig beguenstigt, ihm reiche Gelegenheit der Befriedigung giebt und ihn so zum Verschwender jener Kraft macht, ueber welche sonst der durch seine Heftigkeit laestig gewordene Trieb gebieten wuerde" (10: 98).

> *Conquest over the passions?* – No, not if this is to mean their enfeeblement and annihilation. *They must be enlisted in our service.* . . . At length we should trust them enough to restore their freedom to them: they love us like good servants and willingly go wherever our best interests lie (*Will*, 1: 307).[15]

The sublimation of a passion is thus essentially a redirection of the energy of a passion toward a more worthy goal. Eventually a person will have learned to sublimate each of his passions and thus be able to realize himself completely as a superman, giving full range to the expression of his being. This is, however, only the ideal theory of sublimation, based upon a human being who is completely aware of his mental constitution and is thus capable of making the right choices. Nietzsche admitted himself that such a person is extremely rare:

> To however high a degree a man can attain to knowledge of himself, nothing can be more incomplete than the conception which he forms of the instincts constituting his individuality. He can scarcely name the most common instincts: their number and force, their flux and reflux, their action and counteraction, and, above all, the laws of their nutrition, remain absolutely unknown to him (*Dawn*, 124).[16]

This ignorance is not the only impediment facing the individual who wants to overcome his or her passions. In the same aphorism in which he elaborated on the six methods for control, Nietzsche asserted that the individual has very little control over his reactions.

> The will to combat the violence of a craving is beyond our power, equally with the method we adopt and the success we may have in applying it. In all this process our intellect is rather merely the blind instrument of another rival craving, whether it be the impulse to repose, or the fear of disgrace or other evil consequences, or love (*Dawn*, 108).[17]

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[15] *"Ueberwindung der Affekte?* – Nein, wenn es Schwaeche und Vernichtung derselben bedeuten soll. Sondern in Dienst nehmen. . . . Endlich giebt man ihnen eine vertrauensvolle Freiheit wieder: sie lieben uns wie gute Diener und gehen freiwillig dorthin, wo unser Bestes hin will" (18: 268).

[16] "Wie weit einer seine Selbsterkenntnis auch treiben mag, Nichts kann doch unvollstaendiger sein als das Bild der gesammten *Triebe*, die sein Wesen constituiren. Kaum dass er die groeberen beim Namen nennen kann: ihre Zahl und Staerke, ihre Ebbe und Fluth, ihr Spiel und Widerspiel unter einander und vor Allem die Gesetze ihrer *Ernaehrung* bleiben ihm ganz unbekannt" (10: 112 – 13).

[17] "*Dass* man aber ueberhaupt die Heftigkeit eines Triebes bekaempfen *will*, steht nicht in unserer Macht, ebenso wenig, auf welche Methode man verfaellt, ebenso

Desirable as the sublimation of the passions is in Nietzsche's theory, the chances for its actual realization are evidently small. But having posited the sublimation as an indispensible step on the path to the superman, Nietzsche concerns himself only with the ideal and disregards the actual consequences that may arise for those people whose attempts to overcome their passions fail. In his perception and pronouncements, only success counts.

The Will to Power

Through a sublimation of his passions, a person removes the obstacles which had before prevented a complete realization of his will to power and thus of his true being.

> All 'objects,' 'purposes,' 'meanings' are only manners of expression and metamorphoses of the one will inherent in all phenomena: of the will to power. To have an object, a purpose, or an intention, in fact, *to will* generally, is equivalent to the desire for *greater strength*, for fuller growth, and for the *means* thereto *in addition*. The most general and fundamental instinct in all action and willing is precisely on that account the one which is least known and is most concealed; for in practice we always follow its bidding, for the simple reason that we *are* in ourselves its bidding (*Will*, 2: 146).[18]

Through sublimation, the essence, i.e. energy, and the objective, i.e. an increase of power, of a passion remain the same, but now they can find a better manifestation and can thus be put to better use.

The will to power is the most important force in the universe, subject only to the workings of the eternal recurrence. Zarathustra explains to his audience that the will to power is the root of all existence.

Where I found a living creature, there I found will to power; and even in the

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[17](cont'd) wenig, ob man mit dieser Methode Erfolg hat. Vielmehr ist unser Intellect bei diesem ganzen Vorgange ersichtlich nur das blinde Werkzeug eines *anderen Triebes*, welcher ein *Rival* dessen ist, der uns durch seine Heftigkeit quaelt: sei es der Trieb nach Ruhe oder die Furcht vor Schande und anderen boesen Folgen oder die Liebe" (10: 99).

[18]"Alle Alle 'Zwecke,' 'Ziele,' 'Sinne' sind nur Ausdrucksweisen und Metamorphosen des Einen Willens, der allem Geschehen inhaerirt: des Willens zur Macht. Zwecke-, Ziele-, Absichten-haben, *Wollen* ueberhaupt, ist soviel wie *Staerker*-werden-wollen, Wachsen-wollen - und *dazu* auch die *Mittel* wollen. Der allgemeinste und unterste Instinkt in allem Tun und Wollen ist eben deshalb der unerkannteste und verborgenste geblieben, weil in praxi wir immer seinem Gebote folgen, weil wir dies Gebot *sind*" (19: 127 - 28).

> will of the servant I found the will to be master. . . . Only where life is, there is also will: not will to life, but – so I teach you – will to power! The living creature values many things higher than life itself; yet out of this evaluation itself speaks – the will to power! (*Zarathustra*, 137 – 38).[19]

At this point of his oeuvre, Nietzsche expanded considerably the concept of power with which he had been concerned also in his earlier works. Before *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche had limited his consideration of power to interpersonal relations where he saw it as a decisive force permeating every deed. Every action by a human being toward another is interpreted as the attempt to increase one's power at the expense of the other.[20]

Beginning with *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, Nietzsche expanded the concept of the will to power by making external power secondary to true power which is the result of the successful will to overcome oneself. In writings published after *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche elaborated this concept to an extent that makes it possible to see the basic structure of the will to power as the force that dominates all life.

> To seek self-preservation merely, is the expression of a state of distress, or of the limitation of the true, fundamental instinct of life, which aims at the *extension of power*, and with this in view often enough calls in question self-preservation and sacrifices it (*Wisdom*, 289).
>
> A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength – life itself is *will to power*, self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results

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[19]"Wo ich Lebendiges fand, da fand ich Willen zur Macht; und noch im Willen des Dienenden fand ich den Willen, Herr zu sein. . . . Nur, wo Leben ist, da ist auch Wille: aber nicht Wille zum Leben, sondern – so lehre ich's dich – Wille zur Macht! Vieles ist dem Lebenden hoeher geschaetzt, als Leben selber; doch aus dem Schaetzen selber heraus redet – der Wille zur Macht!" (13: 148 – 49).

[20]Nietzsche sees even the call for pity as motivated by an urge for power: "The pity . . . is in so far a consolation for the weak and suffering in that the latter recognize therein that they *possess still one power*, in spite of their weakness, the power of giving pain. The unfortunate derives a sort of pleasure from this feeling of superiority, of which the exhibition of pity makes him conscious" (*Human*, 1: 69). ("Das Mitleiden . . . ist insofern eine Troestung fuer die Schwachen und Leidenden, als sie daran erkennen, doch wenigstens noch Eine *Macht zu haben*, trotz aller ihrer Schwaeche, die *Macht, wehe zu tun*. Der Ungluckliche gewinnt eine Art von Lust in diesem Gefuehl der Ueberlegenheit, welches das Bezeugen des Mitleids in ihm zum Bewusstsein bringt" [8: 69]). The passage loses in translation since "pity" does not convey the whole extent of the German "Mitleid" which translates literally as "suffering with."

(*Beyond*, 21).[21]

At the time of his collapse in 1889, Nietzsche had not yet fully developed the concept of the will to power. Many of his aphorisms concerning the will to power were still unorganized and inconclusive. The posthumous publication of some of his notes under the title *Der Wille zur Macht* has complicated rather than made easier the comprehension of this concept which is still an object of discussion among scholars.[22] The overcoming of a passion, for example, can be interpreted as the victory of one will to power over another. We do, however, have to keep in mind that everything changes constantly. There never is an equilibrium of all forces that would result in a fixed state, since that would contradict all insight we have into the workings of the universe. As stated earlier, Nietzsche perceived constant change as a basic cosmic force. Thus we arrive at the following conclusion:

> Nietzsche's claim that the world is nothing but will to power means, basically, that the world consists solely of the flux of various centers of force, or power, which are constantly seeking to overcome, or appropriate, each other and thereby increase their quantum of power (Mittelman, 135).

The ultimate objective of any individual will to power is to dominate as *the* will to power. This would entail not only a temporary dominance but also an eternal one – because this dominance would recur as part of the eternal recurrence of everything – and thus perpetuate itself into eternity.

The competition of the various wills to power leads to the conclusion that everybody is in constant competition with everybody else. The will to external power is most easily recognized, yet it is not necessarily the strongest or most important will. It does, however, have the practical consequence that for one's will to power to dominate, one has to accept the fact of the perpetual competition and respond by behaving

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[21] "Sich selbst erhalten wollen ist der Ausdruck einer Nothlage, einer Einschraenkung des eigentlichen Lebens-Grundtriebes, der auf *Machterweiterung* hinausgeht und in diesem Willen oft genug die Selbsterhaltung in Frage stellt und opfert" (12: 272).

"Vor allem will etwas Lebendiges seine Kraft *auslassen* – Leben selbst ist Wille zur Macht –: die Selbsterhaltung ist nur eine der indirekten und haeufigsten Folgen *davon*" (15: 20 – 21).

[22] For a more detailed analysis of the will to power see Wolfgang Mueller-Lauter, "Nietzsches Lehre vom Willen zur Macht," *Nietzsche-Studien* 3 (1974): 1 – 60; Willard Mittelman, "The Relation of Nietzsche's Theory of the Will to Power and His Earlier Concept of Power," *Nietzsche-Studien* 9 (1980): 122 – 41.

competitively. Only strict selfishness makes possible - but does not guarantee - the dominance of one's will to power.

These four interrelated concepts form the core of Nietzsche's philosophy. He was concerned also with other concepts, such as the Dionysian-Apollonian dichotomy that he considered elementary for the creation of art. However, Grove's use of the literary techniques of nineteenth-century Realism and Naturalism set him at odds with the view of the artist that Nietzsche had put forth in *Die Geburt der Tragoedie*; and Grove's constant reliance on a single narrative point of view[23] contradicts the idea that there is no "objective" point of view but that instead everything exists only in the interrelationship of different and competing perspectives (c.f. Mueller-Lauter, 48). Grove's literary practice denies this concept.

As stated earlier, Grove consciously rejected the concept of the eternal recurrence. We can conclude that Grove, like so many of his contemporaries, read Nietzsche in a distorted manner. As will be seen, he accepted and used the concepts of the superman, the overcoming of the passions, and the will to power, but he reduced them considerably. In Grove's works, existence is reduced to the physical existence of a life-span, and all the goals implied by the three concepts are valid only until a character's actual physical death. Our use of the terms "superman," "overcoming of the passions," and "will to power" thus has to be qualified accordingly. Only if we limit them in Grove's manner can we understand his usage of them, even though this means that we are left with a philosophy that has departed considerably from its Nietzschean origins.

Most scholars of philosophy had many reservations about Nietzsche - particularly because he lacked formal training and failed to develop a system for his philosophy - but for readers with a non-professional interest in his writings Nietzsche became so popular that by 1900 "his was a household name for the German public" (Nicholls, "Beginnings," 24). It seems impossible to determine the whole extent to which Nietzsche influenced the perceptions of his own and later generations, but the following account by Erich Heller suggests his importance:

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[23]Exceptions to this approach can be found only in *Two Generations* and *The Master of the Mill*. I shall argue that this change results from changes in Grove's philosophical position.

> As for modern German literature and thought, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they would not be what they are if Nietzsche had never lived. Name almost any poet, man of letters, philosopher, who wrote in German during the twentieth century and attained to stature and influence . . . and you name at the same time Friedrich Nietzsche. He is to them all . . . the categorical interpreter of a world which they contemplate poetically or philosophically without ever radically upsetting its Nietzschean structure (174).

Yet Nietzsche's influence was even greater. Heller limits his view to German literature, but, through translations and the international exchange of ideas, Nietzsche's philosophy reached a large audience outside of Germany. His influence on non-German authors was not quite so large as on artists of his native country, yet many major figures of European literary history were strongly indebted to Nietzsche.[24]

To show the varied manner in which several contemporaries of Felix Paul Greve responded to Nietzsche in their writing, I shall consider works by three of the most important continental European novelists of the first half of this century. I can of necessity present only a small selection which cannot convey the whole extent of Nietzsche's tremendous impact on modern literature, but we can get a good impression of his significance by studying the Nietzschean element in the writings of Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, and Andre Gide. Their writings exhibit strong Nietzschean influences, but each was concerned with different aspects of the philosophy. A fourth very important author, Stefan George, will be discussed in the next chapter since Greve's career was directly linked to George's.

In his self-analytical account *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, Thomas Mann, undoubtedly one of the most important German authors of this century, named as the most important influence upon his intellectual and artistic development "Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner – [they] are like a triple star of eternally united spirits that shines

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[24]Numerous studies such as the following demonstrate Nietzsche's vast influence on international twentieth-century literature: Herbert W. Reichert, *Friedrich Nietzsche's Impact on Modern German Literature*; R.A. Nicholls, *Nietzsche in the Early Works of Thomas Mann*; Rudolf Walter, *Nietzsche-Jugendstil-H. Mann: Zur geistigen Situation der Jahrhundertwende;* Patrick Bridgwater, *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony*; Colin Milton, *Lawrence and Nietzsche: A Study in Influence*; Eric H. Deudon, *Nietzsche en France: L'Antichristianisme et la Critique, 1891 – 1915;* John Burt Foster, *Heirs to Dionysus: A Nietzschean Current in Literary Modernism.*

powerfully in the German sky – symbolizing events that are not intimately German but European" (*Reflections*, 49).[25] Nietzsche was certainly the brightest of these stars for Mann. Although Mann's statement sounds very impressive, it has to be taken with great caution. Most of Mann's writing is heavily influenced by Nietzsche, but his acceptance of the philosopher was very selective, as he stated explicitly:

> From the start he was not so much for me the prophet of some kind of vague 'superman,' as he was for most people when he was in fashion, as rather the incomprehensibly greatest and most experienced psychologist of decadence (*Reflections*, 55).[26]

Almost all of Mann's early stories are concerned with the dichotomy of artistic sensitivity and factual reality, and their psychological basis as well as their interpretation and outcome are clearly Nietzschean.

"Der Wille zum Glueck" (published 1896) is an early and rather naive interpretation of the will to power. Mann took literally Nietzsche's claim that life is will to power and that every will to power is in perpetual conflict with other wills to power. Paolo Hoffmann's physical existence depends solely on his will to happiness. As soon as his will to happiness has been victorious, there is no conflict and thus purpose left for his will to power, and he dies.[27]

Mann's reading of Nietzsche is best exemplified in his three early novellas about artistic existence, *Tristan*, *Tonio Kroeger* (both published 1903), and *Der Tod in Venedig* (published 1912). The central character of *Tristan*, Detlev Spinell is Mann's investigation into decadent artistic existence. Spinell is referred to as "artist," and the description of his novel (8: 224) allows the conclusion that Spinell is a decadent artist. His perception of artistic existence obviously parallels that which the young Felix Paul Greve derived from Flaubert:

> The artist may never become involved with life. . . . Whoever starts taking

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[25] "Ein Dreigestirn ewig verbundener Geister, das maechtig leuchtend am deutschen Himmel hervortritt – sie bezeichnen nicht intim deutsche, sondern europaeische Ereignisse: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche und Wagner" (12: 72).

[26] "Nicht so sehr der Prophet irgendeines unanschaulichen 'Uebermenschen' war er mir von Anfang an, wie zur Zeit seiner Moderherrschaft den meisten, als vielmehr der unvergleichlich groesste und erfahrenste Psychologe der Dekadenz" (12: 79)

[27] A similarly naive use of Nietzsche can be found in "Tobias Mindernickel" (published 1898) and in the sketch "Enttaeuschung" (published 1896) in which the central character bears obvious biographical similarities to Nietzsche.

> pleasure in things ceases to be an artist. . . . The artist is as unable to live in life as is the coral creature unable to live on land" ("Flaubert's Theories," 4, 5, 10).[29]

Spinell perfectly illustrates the definition of decadence that Nietzsche had given in *Der Fall Wagner*:

> Life, equal vitality, all the vibration and exuberance of life, driven back into the smallest structure, and the remainder left almost lifeless. Everywhere paralysis, distress, and numbness, or hostility and chaos. . . . The whole no longer lives at all: it is composed, reckoned up, artificial, a fictitious thing (*Case of Wagner*, 20).[29]

Spinell's life is like this. He is a case study of the failure of the decadent artist as Nietzsche had envisioned him.

Tonio Kroeger is "the most personal of all Mann's writings" (Nicholls, *Early Works*, 21). The central character is a thinly disguised self-portrait of Mann who later stated that "in *Tonio Kroeger*, Nietzsche's cultural principle broke through, the principle that would continue to be dominant in the future" (*Reflections*, 63).[30] Tonio Kroeger is the young successful author searching for the roots of his artistry which arises out of the conflict between the imagined sphere of pure art and Kroeger's bourgeois background. The poles of the Dionysian and the Apollonian that Nietzsche had set up in *Die Geburt der Tragoedie* are the obvious basis of Kroeger's contemplation:

> I shall never comprehend how one can honour the extraordinary and daemonic as an ideal. No, life as the central antinomy of mind and art does not represent itself to us as a vision of savage greatness and ruthless beauty; we who are set apart and different do not conceive it as, like us, unusual; it is the normal, respectable and admirable that is the kingdom of our longing: life, in all its

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[29] "Der Kuenstler darf sich niemals ins Leben mischen. . . . Wer zu geniessen beginnt, hoert damit auf, Kuenstler zu sein. . . . Er [der Kuenstler] kann so wenig im Leben leben, wie das Korallentierchen auf dem Lande" ("Flauberts Theorien").

[29] "Das Leben, die *gleiche* Lebendigkeit, die Vibration und Exuberanz des Lebens in die kleinsten Gebilde zurueckgedraengt, der Rest *arm* an Leben. Ueberall Laehmung, Muehsal, Erstarrung *oder* Feindschaft und Chaos. . . . Das Ganze lebt ueberhaupt nicht mehr: es ist zusammengesetzt, gerechnet, kuenstlich, ein Artefakt" (17: 22).

[30] "[Dass] in *Tonio Kroeger* das Nietzsche'sche Bildungselement zum Durchbruch kam, das fortan vorherrschend bleiben sollte" (12: 94).

> seductive banality! That man is very far from being an artist . . . whose last and deepest enthusiasm is the *raffine*, the eccentric and satanic; who does not know a longing for the innocent, the simple and the living, for a little friendship, devotion, familiar human happiness, – the gnawing, surreptitious hankering . . . for the bliss of the commonplace (*Stories*, 108).[31]

Kroeger's decision to accept his fate of living apart from society and regular life and to make the best of it approaches the Nietzschean concept of *amor fati*.

Der Tod in Venedig is so strongly influenced by Nietzsche's concept of art that Hans Wysling referred to it as "an attempt to translate Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* into the epic form".[32] The central character of the novella, Gustav Aschenbach, is a successful author, but he is not an artist – at least not in Nietzschean terms. His family background with a Dionysian mother and an Apollonian father provides him with excellent prerequisites: "The union of dry, conscientious officialdom and ardent, obscure impulse, produced an artist – and this particular artist" (*Stories*, 382).[33] Aschenbach's artistic practice is, however, an absolute denial of the conflict of Dionysian and Apollonian forces. He has totally suppressed the Dionysian element and produces his works very diligently but without inspiration. Mann thus makes Aschenbach a representative of the majority of his literary contemporaries whose lack of inspiration Nietzsche had lamented in *Ecce homo*:

> A thought suddenly flashes up like lightning, it comes with necessity, without faltering – I have never had any choice in the matter. . . . Everything happens quite involuntarily, as if in a tempestuous outburst of freedom, of absoluteness,

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[31] "Ich werde nie und nimmer begreifen, wie man das Ausserordentliche und Daemonische als Ideal verehren mag. Nein, das 'Leben,' wie es als ewiger Gegensatz dem Geiste und der Kunst gegenuebersteht, – nicht als eine Vision von blutiger Groesse und wilder Schoenheit, nicht als das Ungewoehnliche stellt es uns Ungewoehnlichen sich dar; sondern das Normale, Wohlanstaendige und Liebenswuerdige ist das Reich unserer Sehnsucht, ist das Leben in seiner verfuehrerischen Banalitaet! Der ist noch lange kein Kuenstler . . . , dessen letzte und tiefste Schwaermerei das Raffinierte, Exzentrische und Satanische ist, der die Sehnsucht nicht kennt nach dem Harmlosen, Einfachen und Lebendigen, nach ein wenig Freundschaft, Hingebung, Vertraulichkeit und menschlichem Glueck, – die verstohlene und zehrende Sehnsucht . . . nach den Wonnen der Gewoehnlichkeit" (8: 302 – 03).

[32] "Ein Versuch, Nietzsches *Geburt der Tragoedie* ins Epische zu uebersetzen" (172). (My translation)

[33] "Die Vermaehlung dienstlich nuechterner Gewissenhaftigkeit mit dunkleren, feurigeren Impulsen liess einen Kuenstler und diesen besonderen Kuenstler entstehen" (8: 450).

> of power and divinity. . . . This is my experience of inspiration. I do not doubt but that I should have to go back thousands of years before I could find another who could say to me: "It is mine also!" (*Ecce homo*, 102 - 03).[34]

Through Aschenbach's success Mann condemns the society that is unable to see beyond the surface and discover the lack of artistic inspiration. Extraordinary circumstances lead Aschenbach to abandon the Apollonian control and to embrace the Dionysian passion, eventually to such an extent that it dominates him completely. But the Dionysian extreme alone is as detrimental to Aschenbach's creativity as the Apollonian. Only at the one point where Aschenbach acknowledges the Dionysian force without abandoning the Apollonian is he able to live up to the artistic potential inherent in him and thus to produce "that page and a half of choiciest prose, so chaste, so lofty, so poignant with feeling, which would shortly be the wonder and admiration of the multitude" (*Stories*, 414).[35]

Nietzsche's influence upon Thomas Mann did not end with the publication of *Der Tod in Venedig*. Mann was concerned with the philosopher in one form or another all through his oeuvre until his last great novel, *Doktor Faustus*. In one of his last essays, "Nietzsche's Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung," Mann summarized his evaluation of Nietzsche and thus shows the limits of his acceptance:

> Nietzsche was, above all, a great critic and philosopher of culture, a European prose-writer and essayist of the very first rank - in this sense, too, he was a disciple of Schopenhauer. His genius reached its height at the time he wrote *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals* (*Last Essays*, 148).[36]

Jon Tuska summarized Mann's reading of Nietzsche by stating that Mann "always

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[34]"Wie ein Blitz leuchtet ein Gedanke auf, mit Nothwendigkeit, in der Form ohne Zoegern, - ich habe nie eine Wahl gehabt. . . . Alles geschieht im hoechsten Sinne unfreiwillig, aber nie in einem Sturme von Freiheits-Gefuehl, von Unbedingtsein, von Macht, von Goettlichkeit. . . . Dies ist *meine* Erfahrung von Inspiration; ich zweifle nicht daran, dass man Jahrtausende zurueckgehen muss, um Jemanden zu finden, der mir sagen darf, 'es ist auch die meine'" (21: 251 - 52).

[35]"Jene anderthalb Seiten erlesener Prosa . . . , deren Lauterkeit, Adel und schwingende Gefuehlsspannung binnen kurzem die Bewunderung vieler erregen sollte" (8: 493).

[36]"Nietzsche war vor allem ein grosser Kritiker und Kultur-Philosoph, ein aus der Schule Schopenhauers kommender europaeischer Prosaist und Essayist obersten Ranges, dessen Genie zur Zeit von *Jenseits von Gut und Boese* und der *Genealogie der Moral* auf seinen Scheitelpunkt kam" (9: 682 - 83).

admired Nietzsche the critic, never Nietzsche the visionary" (298). Mann's artistic work demonstrates that he shared Nietzsche's critique of the decadent artistic environment he witnessed, and his autobiographical statements make clear that Nietzsche's writings gave direction to Mann's critique. Yet it is also evident that Mann arrived at different conclusions and remedies than Nietzsche who was an important impulse rather than a perpetual guide for Mann.[37]

Hermann Hesse reacted to very different aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy. Rather than see Nietzsche simply as the psychologist of decadence, as Thomas Mann had done, Hesse also accepted some of those remedies that Nietzsche had suggested. In his essay, "Dank an Goethe," Hesse stated that "no other writer but Nietzsche ever engrossed, attracted, tormented me to the same degree, forced me to reflect to the same degree".[38] Elements of Nietzsche's philosophy can be found in almost all of Hesse's works. We find Hesse concerned with the possibility of an artistic superman who can show others the path to a richer existence. The most outstanding example of this type is Harry Haller in *Der Steppenwolf*. The other thought that Hesse derived from Nietzsche is the concept of *amor fati*, the idea that everybody has to accept and embrace his fate in order to be happy. This element is particularly strong in pieces that Hesse wrote around the end of the First World War when many of his countrymen were seeking for a new meaning in life.

Hesse's reception of Nietzsche is most evident in the essay "Zarathustras Wiederkehr" where he addressed the German youth in a tone which is a clear imitation of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, even though this emulation is not always successful (c.f. Boulby, 83). How well acquainted Hesse was with *Zarathustra* can be seen from his account of the composition.

From fascinated, sacred nights of reading in my youth the tone came to me in

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[37]We do not know how well acquainted Greve/Grove was with Mann and his work. Both lived in Munich during 1902 and took part in the city's artistic life, but no personal encounter is documented. However, Greve refers to *Tonio Kroeger* under the false title "Timm Kroeger" in his *Randarabesken zu Oscar Wilde* (9), and Mrs. Grove's statement that Grove "insisted on her reading *Buddenbrooks* in German" (Stobie, "Simcoe," 138), indicates that he was well aware of Mann's artistry and importance.

[38]"Kein anderer Schriftsteller ausser Nietzsche hat mich je so beschaeftigt, so angezogen und gepeinigt, so zur Auseinandersetzung gezwungen" (12: 146). (My translation)

> which I wrote down my-address to the young. It did not develop from consideration, not from attempts. It developed from itself, uncalled.[39]

In the essay, Zarathustra admonishes his audience to seek for salvation from the present misery in themselves: "The world does not exist to be improved. You, too, do not exist to be improved. But you exist in order to be yourselves."[40] Hesse thus perpetuates Nietzsche's demand, made in *The Joyful Wisdom* (209), that everybody's first duty is to be oneself, which, according to Nietzsche, is the only way to happiness and fulfilment. Only in this manner, Hesse claims, would his readers find meaning in their lives: "May you learn to seek God in yourselves! . . . There is no God but the one inside you."[41]

The novella *Klingsors letzter Sommer* portrays an artist who resembles very closely Nietzsche immediately before his breakdown. On the edge of insanity, Klingsor paints a self-portrait of incomparable expressiveness, reminiscent of Nietzsche's self-portrait in *Ecce homo* to which Hesse alludes directly:

> It is man, ecce homo, the tired, greedy, wild, childish and clever man of our late age, dying, death-seeking European: enthusiastically inspired by his knowledge of his destruction.[42]

Klingsor also incorporated the idea of *amor fati* when he overcomes the fear of his death and comes to accept it as part of his fate, practicing his earlier pronouncement, "Everything is the same, everything is equally good. . . . If only the main ingredient is there, the love, the fire, the affection of the mind."[43]

The novel in which Hesse was most concerned with Nietzschean ideas is *Demian* (published 1917). The following quotation from Herbert W. Reichert summarizes aptly Hesse's difficult relationship to the philosopher:

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[39] "Aus begeisterten, heiligen Lesenaechten meiner Juenglingszeit klang mir der Ton herueber, in dem ich meinen Ruf an die Jugend niederschrieb. Er entstand nicht aus Ueberlegung, nicht aus Versuchen. Er entstand von selber, ungerufen" (11: 42). (My translation)

[40] "Die Welt ist nicht da, um verbessert zu werden. Auch ihr seid nicht da, um verbessert zu werden. Ihr seid aber da, um ihr selbst zu sein" (10: 489). (My translation)

[41] "Moechtet ihr lernen, den Gott in euch selbst zu suchen! (10: 493). . . Es gibt keinen andern Gott, als der in euch ist" (10: 496).

[42] "Es ist der Mensch, ecce homo, der muede, gierige, wilde, kindliche und raffinierte Mensch unserer spaeten Zeit, der sterbende, sterbenwollende Europamensch: . . . vom Wissen um seinen Untergang enthusiastisch beseelt" (5: 348). (My translation)

[43] "Es ist alles eins, es ist alles gleich gut. . . . Wenn nur die Hauptsache da ist, die Liebe, das Brennen, das Ergriffensein" (5: 304). (My translation)

> A careful reading makes clear that *Demian* represents not so much an acceptance of, as a debate with Nietzsche, the spokesman of the superman and *amor fati*, to be sure, but also the spokesman of nihilism. In *Demian* Hesse sought to come to grips with Nietzsche; specifically, he sought to overcome nihilism and to integrate the superman into an absolute world order (100).

The novel ends with a view that is only remotely Nietzschean. The narrator, Emil Sinclair, incorporates the hope for a better future brought about by superior human beings, but the mystical and archetypal overtones with which the "supermen" Max Demian and Frau Eva are presented suggest a mysterious telepathic brotherhood rather than the kind of superman Nietzsche had envisioned.

Hesse's quest to overcome nihilism eventually led him to reject Nietzsche and to turn to Eastern mysticism where he could find the concept of God in man as well, but where it leads to community rather than egotistical self-realization. Nietzsche's philosophy was not the inspiration for Hesse's art, but a set of ideas that Hesse considered as a possibility to find meaning in life. His rejection of this philosophy took over twenty years and gave significant impulses to Hesse's creativity, making Nietzsche an important but indirect source for the artist.

Many other German authors were influenced by Nietzsche and could be discussed in a similar manner. The best-known of these were Heinrich Mann, Robert Musil, Ernst Juenger, and Georg Kaiser.

Nietzsche's influence was not restricted to Germany. Authors such as George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Gabriele d'Annunzio, and Jack London read Nietzsche and responded to him in their writings. Of the many international authors whose work shows a reaction to Nietzsche, Andre Gide is the most interesting, not only because Felix Paul Greve tried to befriend Gide and translated some of his books - including the 'Nietzschean' *L'Immoraliste* - but also because Gide is in many respects representative for the development of European literature in the early twentieth century.

The question of the importance of Nietzsche for Gide's work has been asked by almost every critic concerned with Gide's oeuvre, yet there is very little agreement. Gide himself was very vague about the time of his first encounter with Nietzsche's writings (Peyre, 182 - 83), but several of Gide's earlier works, particularly *Les Nourritures terrestres* and *L'Immoraliste*, show obvious parallels to some of Nietzsche's concepts even

though Gide arrives at different conclusions than the philosopher.

Gide had come in contact with Nietzsche's philosophy very naturally through his involvement in the artistic circles in Paris in the last decade of the nineteenth century where "Nietzsche's name was a household word" (Ireland, 182). Even though Gide gained considerable knowledge of Nietzschean texts in later years, he read relatively little original material before the turn of the century. "What he knew of Nietzsche at second hand, fascinated and attracted him; yet at the same time he seems instinctively to have hesitated before exposing himself directly to so powerful a stimulus" (Ireland, 182). Notwithstanding Gide's claim that he had encountered Nietzschean thought only after finishing *L'Immoraliste*, his statements in the twelfth "Lettre a Angele," published in 1898, show clearly that he was acquainted with Nietzschean philosophy and welcomed it as giving new and important impulses:

> I have said that we were expecting Nietzsche long before we knew him: that is because Nietzscheism began long before Nietzsche. Nietzscheism is at once a manifestation of superabundant life, which had already been expressed in the works of the great artists, and a tendency also, which, depending on the epoch, had been baptized 'Jansenism' or 'Protestantism,' and which will now be called Nietzscheism, because Nietzsche has dared to formulate to the last detail everything latent that was murmuring in it (quoted in Cordle, 66).

The central idea underlying *Les Nourritures terrestres* (*The Fruits of the Earth*), published in 1897, is "dispossession and pantheistic submission of the self in the moment" (Faletti, 47). Menalcas, the rather dubious central character of the book, preaches hedonism as the only path to happiness:

> We only exist . . . in the here and now; in this momentariness the whole past perishes before any of the future is born. . . . Each moment of our lives is essentially irreplaceable; you should learn to sink yourself in it utterly (74).

Even though this attitude is to a certain degree reconcilable with Nietzsche's concept of *amor fati*, an earlier statement by Menalcas makes that reconciliation impossible: "There is profit in desires, and profit in the satisfaction of desires – for only so are they increased. . . . Each one of my desires has enriched me more than the always deceitful possession of the object of my desire" (13). Although Nietzsche had a high opinion of people with strong passions – such as Cesare Borgia (c.f. *Will to Power* , 2: 311) – he saw them only as a potential, because the stronger the passion is, the more fruitful it will be

after its sublimation. Menalcas thus preaches not adherence to Nietzschean ideals but rather "a caricature of Nietzscheism" (Peyre, 176). The book's final advice,

> Care for nothing in yourself but what you feel exists nowhere else, and out of yourself create, impatiently or patiently, . . . the most irreplaceable of beings (179),

is not an admonition to the reader to develop into a Nietzschean superman, but rather to become its opposite, a person dominated by an irresistable indulgence in momentary passions. This conclusion is decadent rather than Nietzschean, but the book as a whole is not substantial enough to be considered a critique of Nietzsche.

L'Immoraliste (The Immoralist), published in 1902, clearly shows Nietzschean elements. William W. Holdheim even referred to it as Gide's "'Nietzschean' novel" (535), but that is an exaggeration. *The Immoralist* is primarily not a debate of Nietzschean ideas but rather a highly autobiographical novel (Guerard, 102) in which Nietzschean concepts of self-improvement play an important part.

The theme of the book is announced in the first paragraph of Michel's narrative: "To know how to free oneself is nothing, the arduous thing is to know what to do with one's freedom" (11). Recovering from a severe illness, Michel concludes that his reconvalescence is "a matter of will" (33). He thus sees himself kept alive by his will to health just as Paolo Hoffmann had been kept alive by his will to happiness in Thomas Mann's story of the same title. His success leads Michel to the conclusion that he alone is responsible for the continuation of his life, particularly since he had refused to pray for his health. Thus he believes that he has realized to a large extent the ideal of depending on nothing but himself which is one of the essential factors of Nietzschean superhumanity.

Having come to regard himself as "a perfectable being" (64) and deeming himself absolutely self-sufficient in his existence, Michel finally rejects humanity in order to find his true self.

> Every day there grew stronger in me a confused consciousness of untouched treasures somewhere lying covered up, hidden, smothered by culture and decency and morality (176 - 77).

This position is easily defensible from a Nietzschean point of view. The higher state of being can only be achieved by a person who has freed himself from all exterior dependencies, including culture and morality. But Michel is incapable of gaining access to

these "untouched treasures" because he does not know how to use his newly found freedom. Instead of using his freedom to overcome his passions, Michel indulges in them and thus makes it less and less possible to reach the higher state of existence that he hopes for. Gide thus demonstrates the danger threatening a person who cannot replace the norms of society with better personal ones. Michel is clearly too weak to succeed in his Nietzschean task. Unable to find meaning in his new and self-created life, Michel is reduced to a state of purposeless vegetation.

The Immoralist is clearly written with Nietzschean perceptions of self-fulfillment in mind, but it is not a discussion of Nietzsche's philosophy. Michel's ideas of self-sufficiency, of finding a new self through a rejection of morals and culture, and his development of a doctrine that "does away with the weak" (181) echo Nietzschean concepts, but his application of these concepts to his practical life make Michel a very "imperfect Nietzschean" (Guerard, 109). Thus the book is "a critique (not rejection) of Nietzschean individualism" (Guerard, 102), rather than its affirmation.

In all of this we have to remember that *The Immoralist* is an autobiographical novel to a large extent concerned with Michel's gradual recognition and acceptance of his latent homosexuality, paralleling Gide's own development. Nietzsche's admonition to love one's fate and to become who one is can be interpreted as encouragement for Gide to accept this process openly. In this, Nietzsche would be less guideline than justification. It is clear that *The Immoralist* would have been written even if Gide had never heard of Nietzsche and that it would have been similar in many autobiographical facts, but only his reading of Nietzsche enabled Gide to view his personal development in this manner. To derive from this element the label "Nietzschean" for the novel as a whole – as Holdheim does (535) – is misleading.

Nietzsche clearly exerted a certain influence upon Gide, but the question remains how significant this influence was. Gide himself welcomed literary influences and stressed their importance for the development of his mind:

> Their power comes from the fact that they have merely revealed to me some part of myself of which I was still in ignorance; for me they were only an explanation – yes, but an explanation of myself (*Pretexts*, 27).

This is a good description for the kind of influence Nietzsche had on Gide. Rather than find something totally new through his reading of Nietzsche, Gide found a way to discover something that was hidden in him and had not yet come to light. Holdheim

states that "in 1895 Gide was ready for Nietzsche; in fact, we find 'Nietzschean' ideas in his *Journal* before that date" (537), and Gide himself referred to Nietzsche – as to Dostoevsky and Freud – as "rather an authorization than an awakening" (*Pretexts*, 306).

Gide's later artistic development shows that the Nietzschean influence was strong only temporarily. He went on to explore other intellectual directions "after a short intellectual flirtation with certain simplified Nietzschean concepts regeneration through the casting off of the debilitating aspects of Christian ethics" (Bree, 99). Yet the time of the strong Nietzschean influence – about 1892 to 1907 (Peyre, 176) – was significant because it was a time in which almost every other European author reacted to Nietzsche in one form or another. It is also important for this study since this was the time when Felix Paul Greve tried to befriend and even emulate Gide (c.f. Gide, *Pretexts*, 234 – 42).

The list of authors discussed in this chapter could be extended almost endlessly. Yet this would only have given further illustration to the point that I have established. Friedrich Nietzsche's works were a major intellectual event in Europe at the turn of the century, and most creative writers responded to him artistically since they obviously considered his ideas highly important. Yet it is also clear that the common practice of almost all of these authors was that they responded to only one or very few aspects of the philosophy and more or less ignored the rest. Thus each of them arrived at his own view of Nietzsche, but none of these views was complete. Mann, Hesse, and Gide went through a Nietzschean phase, but like most of their contemporaries they later discarded most of Nietzsche's thought and sought for new values elsewhere. Thus they reflect the development of European intellectual life in which they participated.

Grove, however, left Europe in 1909, when Nietzsche was still very highly regarded, and spent the rest of his life more or less cut off from the intellectual debate. Thus everything we find in his writing after 1909 is the result of his independent thought, not of his interaction with others. An analysis much more comprehensive than those of this chapter will demonstrate which image of Nietzsche Felix Paul Greve developed and how it changed throughout his career as Frederick Philip Grove.

III. The German Phase

At the end of the nineteenth century, many European artists and intellectuals were alienated from the bourgeois society in which they lived. This development took place first in France, but other countries were to witness the same general trend which was made stronger by the fact that many artists went to Paris in their search for inspiration and intellectual exchange. In the course of an increased industrialization, the bourgeoisie perceived improved methods of production and trade as the most important means of improving the quality of life and considered the pursuit of the ideal of beauty impractical. At the same time, Charles Darwin's discoveries made it possible to deny spiritual values such as religion and beauty.

The different social composition of industrialized society had a significant impact on the development of aesthetics, particularly those of the novel. The desire of the newly-risen bourgeoisie to see itself represented in works of fiction led to a more realistic portrait of contemporary life, but the emphasis on exact descriptions of verifiable facts set severe limits to this art. Many artists and intellectuals refused to accept these limitations upon their creativity. Restricting their imagination meant for many artists the surrender of creative art altogether.

The rebellion against a society which appeared to threaten intellectual and artistic freedom fell into two basic groups, both in a wider sense romantic. One group first gained prominence in Germany during the 1890s, but its tenets soon spread to the rest of Europe. Its members dreamed of overcoming the weaknesses of the world by creating a strong alternative to it which would eventually change the *status quo*. The philosophical basis for this approach to reality was provided by Friedrich Nietzsche. Other intellectuals soon developed his ideas further, although frequently not in directions intended by him.

Coming out of the romantic tradition, many artists believed in the pursuit of beauty as the most valuable activity. Since the bourgeoisie adhered to radically different values, the Aestheticists rejected the bourgeoisie as thoroughly as they were rejected by it. Instead of describing the beauty of factual reality, the Aestheticists strove to create a world of pure beauty separate from the world of facts. Symbolist poetics reveals the extent to which artists such as Baudelaire, Mallarme, and Rimbaud rejected factual reality. How strongly they rejected the kind of life cherished by the bourgeoisie becomes evident from the famous sentence, "As for living? our servants will do that for us," in Villiers de l'Isle Adam's play, *Axel* (170).

Aestheticism began in France, where bourgeois realism had also undergone its first major development, but soon spread to other countries, most notably Britain and Germany. In Britain, Aestheticism fell largely into two camps. The Pre-Raphaelites sought pure and absolute beauty in an artistic world that had hardly any connections to the world in which the artists lived, whereas the Decadents attempted to make their lives works of art as well.

The German literary scene that Felix Paul Greve witnessed was characterized by the competition of three artistic trends. Realists such as Theodor Fontane and Naturalists such as Arno Holz accepted reality as the material of art and attempted to represent this world and its workings as accurately as possible. Influenced by Nietzsche, authors who left no lasting impact on German literature - such as Adolf Wilbrandt, Hans Hoffmann, and Karl Bleibtreu - envisioned a higher kind of man who would eventually overcome the faults of this world through his own power.[1] The Aestheticists were part of the very heterogeneous *Jugendstil* movement that had grown out of the Romanticism which had been the dominant artistic philosophy in Germany throughout the nineteenth century. The German version of Aestheticism most similar to the ones prominent in France and Britain was the Neo-Romanticism practiced by Stefan George and his disciples. The young Felix Paul Greve was first attracted to Oscar Wilde - possibly because of Wilde's wit and defiant pose - and through Wilde to the German Aestheticists and Stefan George.

Frederick Philip Grove's first experience as a creative artist thus took place within the aesthetics of a Romanticism that rejected the factual world as basis for artistic pursuits. This attitude is the opposite of the one that Grove professed throughout his Canadian oeuvre. We could therefore reject Greve's artistic activities of the years 1901 to 1903 as youthful aberrations and begin our consideration of his works with his first novel, *Fanny Essler*, which is much closer in style and attitude to the Canadian novels than Greve's early poetry. Doing that, we would miss an important lesson which Greve learned in the pursuit of the artistic dream and which would influence him throughout his life. We shall see that the consequences of his pursuit of aestheticist artistry shaped Grove's perception of existence in a way that made his reading of Nietzschean philosophy a significant factor in his later artistic dealing with reality. The aestheticist poet Felix Paul Greve is an incongruous but nevertheless essential element in the development of

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[1]See Berg, *Der Uebermensch in der modernen Litteratur* for more information on these authors.

the Frederick Philip Grove who wrote *Settlers of the Marsh* and *The Master of the Mill.*

Both Nietzsche and the Aestheticists saw themselves as rebels against what Thomas Mann called "the hypocritical morality of the middle-class Victorian age" (*Last Essays*, 157).[2] The struggle against the common enemy led to a situation in which Nietzsche's pronouncements were echoed from a direction for which the philosopher had no sympathy whatsoever. Thomas Mann, an acute observer of the intellectual forces dominating his age, noted:

> It is certainly a surprise to observe the close kinship of many of Nietzsche's *apercus* with the far from vain tilts against morality with which, at approximately the same time, Oscar Wilde was shocking and amusing his public (*Last Essays*, 157).[3]

The Aestheticist rebellion manifested itself in rejection of the assumed didactic function of art. Instead, the aestheticists developed the concept of art being nothing but a source of beauty without any practical purposes.[4] The idea of art existing purely for its own sake without any premeditated didactic or moralistic elements included a demand for liberalization of form and subject matter. An immediate consequence of this demand was the widening of the scope of materials that were now being treated in artworks. Particularly noticeable is the large number of works of art that would have been considered immoral or pornographic under pre-Aestheticist standards. The best-known examples of this development are Joris-Karl Huysman's *A Rebours*, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley.

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[2]"Die verheuchelte Moral des viktorianischen, des burgerlichen Zeitalters"(9: 691).
[3]"Es ist ueberraschend, die Verwandtschaft mancher Apercus von Nietzsche mit den keineswegs nur eitlen Attacken auf die Moral festzustellen, mit denen ungefaehr gleichzeitig Oscar Wilde, der englische Aesthet sein Publikum chokierte und zum Lachen brachte" (Mann, 9: 691).
[4]In his conclusion to *The Renaissance*, "the classic statement of the aestheticist view of life" (Johnson, 19), Walter Pater summarized the ideological basis of Aestheticism:

> Our one chance lies in expanding that interval [until death], in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life. . . . Only be sure it is passion - that it does yield you this fruit of quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake, has most, for art comes to you, proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake (159).

Oscar Wilde best represents the practice of Aestheticism. He not only wrote stories that challenged traditional moral perceptions – such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* – but also made his private and public lives examples of the Aestheticist approach to existence. Wilde's life is probably the best statement upon Aestheticism, but a summary of the basic tenets of Aestheticism can be found in a very poignant form in his essay collection, *Intentions*.

The central statement of the essay "The Decay of Lying" is the general principle, "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life" (985). Wilde thus reverses the traditional perception of the interrelationship of art and life which had served as justification for didactic art. Even though life may imitate art, this has no consequences for art itself. "Art never expresses anything but itself" (987); it comes before life and is superior to it. An artist's allegiance should always be with art, not with life, particularly since "it is through art only that we can realize our perfection" (1038). Wilde completes his rejection of demands for a moralistic and didactic art by proving to his readers that "art is out of the reach of morals" (1048). Morality and other demands upon art are external and thus inferior to it. Adhering to moral values thus forces an artist to corrupt the artistic value of his creation and, in fact, to betray his artistry.

Art and life thus exist in two separate spheres for Wilde, art being far superior and offering the higher rewards. As a result of life's alleged imitation of art, the pursuit of beauty in art will eventually even lead to a more beautiful life – but this must never be the artist's motivation. Most importantly, the pursuit of artistic beauty offers a welcome alternative to the unpleasant reality which the Aestheticists witnessed.

This rebellion against the acceptance and promotion of an imperfect reality and the demand for individual perfection unimpeded by any social or moral restrictions unites the otherwise so divergent concepts of Nietzscheanism and Aestheticism. The origins and eventual objectives were radically different from each other, but they shared the quest for a better alternative to the existing mode of life, and it seems that this common ground also attracted Felix Paul Greve.

We do not know exactly when Greve became interested in the English Decadents, particularly Oscar Wilde and Ernest Dowson, but we do know that he read them while still a student of Classical Philology in Bonn. "Not only reading them but taking them deeply to heart. There is ample evidence that Felix was modelling his own life on certain

characteristics of the Decadents" (Spettigue, *European Years*, 51). We can only speculate about the reasons for Greve's fascination with Wilde, but it is not unlikely that Greve saw in Wilde a man who not only talked about mental independence and self-fulfillment but who practised it and thus became capable of producing very attractive art and of daring to publish and to stand up for it.

Spettigue concludes that "Greve tended to take his colours from the people he admired" (*European Years*, 51). Oscar Wilde was a likely model for the impressionable young Greve whose upbringing had made him well aware of the shortcomings and stifling effects of the narrow-minded morality prevalent in the German Empire. It is important to note that Greve was not following a fashion in his admiration of Wilde. Rather, he was a forerunner of the Wilde vogue in Germany and one of those who made it possible. Although Wilde had been very popular in England and France for several years before his death, he remained virtually unknown in Germany until about 1902. Referring to a performance of *Salome* and *The Importance of Being Ernest* in Berlin in late 1902, Max Meyerfeld wrote, "Ridiculous as it seems - on that afternoon, Oscar Wilde was discovered in the capital of the German Empire."[5] Meyerfeld does not specify who translated these two plays, but circumstantial evidence permits the conclusion that the translations were Greve's (Knoenagel, 218 - 19). Early in his career as translator, which began in 1902, Greve concentrated almost exclusively on texts by Aestheticists - Oscar Wilde, Ernest Dowson, Walter Pater, James McNeil Whistler - apparently not to satisfy a specific demand but to make these texts accessible to an as yet uninformed German public. We can derive from this that Greve had a strong personal interest in these texts and their authors. How deep this interest was can be seen from the way in which his life changed.

Greve's involvement with Aestheticism apparently caused him to abandon his original plan to pursue a scholarly career as a philologist. He left Bonn University in the fall of 1900 and spent most of the following year travelling in Italy, an occupation very popular among upcoming artists who apparently hoped that Italy would have the same inspirational effect on them that it had had on the young Goethe.[6] When he returned to Germany in late 1901, Greve did not go back to Bonn, but rather settled in Munich, the

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[5]"So laecherlich es klingen mag: an diesem Nachmittag wurde Oscar Wilde in der Hauptstadt des deutschen Reiches entdeckt" (459). (My translation).

[6]How popular the Italian journey was at the time can also be seen from the fact that almost all the artists described in Thomas Mann's early works have travelled in Italy. Mann himself had been there as well.

center of the various artistic movements that had set out to develop alternatives to the classicist and naturalist artistic tendencies usually associated with Berlin. The parallels to English Aestheticism in the art of Stefan George and the poet's dominating personality may have persuaded the young Greve that his future lay in poetry of the Georgean school. In Munich, Greve attempted to join the circle of poets and scholars that had gathered around George in whom Greve may first have become interested when George gave a reading of his Neo-Romantic poetry at Friedrich-Wilhelms University in Bonn while Greve was a student there.

George had received the central influence on his creative perceptions as a member of the circle of symbolist poets who had come together under the leadership of Stephane Mallarme. It would, however, be misleading to assume that George simply copied Mallarme's aesthetics. When George met Mallarme in 1889, French Symbolism had already progressed beyond the phase of the "Parnassians" who had stressed strict metric and external form as important elements of the poetic craft. By now, poets such as Mallarme and Verlaine were experimenting with *vers libre* and the musical qualities of poetry. Such impressionistic elements had already existed as part of a long tradition in German Romantic poetry, but by George's time, this tradition had become static and trite, as had most German literature. Rather than attempting to reinvigorate German poetry by simply copying the development in French art, George selected from the whole scope of French Symbolism those elements which seemed most appropriate for the particular German situation, even though it meant an acceptance of the "Parnassian" emphasis on form which French poetry had already left behind by then.[1]

After his return to Germany, George published his first collection of poetry, *Hymnen* (1890). He had the book printed privately and sold it to a small goup of people whom he thought capable of understanding his art. In 1892, he founded the *Blaetter fuer die Kunst (Leaves for Art)*, a journal that was to convey to his contemporaries the artistic tenets that George considered essential for the creation of good art. He also used the *Blaetter* to publish his own translations of foreign poetry, particularly Baudelaire and Rimbaud, and to provide a forum for young poets who adhered to his tenets.

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[1]See Gsteiger's essay for further information on the relationship of George's poetry to that of the French Symbolists.

"Neo-Romanticism," as the Georgean approach to art came to be called, rejected rational explanations of reality as a logical organization that can be modified by man.[8] For the Neo-Romantics, such a world was devoid of the greatness that would make it worth living in. They sought a world full of opportunites for ecstasy, and hoped to find it through a spiritual return to mythological Antiquity. George and his followers were by no means the only artists of their age who made this use of mythology. Dominik Jost has summarized this tendency as one of the central elements of the whole *Jugendstil* movement:

> Mythology becomes a protective shield behind which the utopia of original fulfillment or naive heroism can flourish, where the pathos of interiority can realize itself without reproach, where the plain and profane world of the consumer society does not reach and where therefore also the veritist vocabulary does not enter and elevated language alone is valid.[9]

The Neo-Romantics blocked out the negative aspects of historical reality even more radically than the comparable Pre-Raphaelites in Britain and created a mythological paradise in their fantasies. Thus they tried to escape into a world in which there was still room for art, beauty, and heroism, none of which they could find in the massive industrialization which they witnessed in Germany at the time.

One enters such a mythological paradise through art. By creating this paradise in the existing world, the artist improves the world and thus deserves praise. But George went a step further. For him the creation of the Edenic art world took precedence over confronting the real world. The creation of art thus almost becomes a sacred function, since the artist creates the world in which he lives. This quasi-divine function makes him worthy of admiration.

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[8]"In the early Naturalistic texts of Holz and Schlaf and Hauptmann, the emphasis on external realism, physical and social, functions as a demonstration of social and psychological law, in that behaviour and feeling are shown to result from circumstance. Since the psychology is simple and attitudes are clearly related to circumstance, a deterministic effect is achieved" (Pascal, 43 - 44).

[9]"Mythologisches wird zum Schutzschild, hinter dem die Utopie von urspruenglicher Erfuellung oder naivem Heroismus gedeihen kann, wo das Pathos der Innerlichkeit sich ungeschraenkt entfalten darf, wo die platte Profanwelt der Verbrauchergesellschaft nicht hinreicht und wo demzufolge auch das veristische Vokabular zurueckbleibt und allein die gehobene Sprache gilt" (28). (My translation)

In order to achieve this status, the artist has to create a world perfect in subject matter as well as in form. Perfection of form means adherence to rigid principles of rhythm and rhyme and a strict formal organization of the whole volume of poetry which is given its completeness through an absolute unity of content. The poem only means itself, and it is the task of the reader to decipher this meaning. In his aphorisms on poetry, published in the *Blaetter* in 1894, George even said,

> In poetry – as in any other artistic activity – everybody who is still held by the desire to 'say' or to 'effect' something is not even worthy of entering the forecourt of art.[10]

Thus the artist should create his works without taking the interests of the audience into consideration. Every attempt at understanding art, however difficult, has to come from the audience. George's poetry is thus almost automatically restricted to a readership that is willing and able to make the effort required to appreciate the work of art.

George's collection *Der Teppich des Lebens und die Lieder von Traum und Tod mit einem Vorspiel (The Tapestry of Life and the Songs of Dream and Death with a Prelude)*, published in 1899, is generally accepted as the best example of George's artistry. The title poem, "Der Teppich," gives the best image of George's perception of art. The tapestry of men, animals, and plants that George describes at the outset is a representation of an idealized and beautiful reorganization of the existing world. But this beautiful order remains a fixed and unintelligible enigma to most people. Only a few initiates – the prelude has made clear that they are artists – are able to comprehend the order of the tapestry which then comes to life,

> And bring the answer that dispels your doubt.
> It is not at your beck and call on each
> Accustomed day, and not what guilds could share,
> And never for the many nor through speech
> It comes incarnate rarely in the rare (*Works*, 185).[11]

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[10]"In der dichtung – wie in aller kunst-bethaetigung ist jeder der noch von der sucht ergriffen ist etwas 'sagen' etwas 'wirken' zu wollen nicht einmal wert in den vorhof der kunst einzutreten" (122). (My translation)

[11]"Die loesung bringend ueber die ihr sammet! / Sie ist nach willen nicht: ist nicht fuer jede / Gewohne stunde: ist kein schatz der gilde / Sie wird den vielen nie und nie durch rede / Sie wird den seltnen selten im gebilde" (5:40).

The tapestry of life, so much more beautiful and thus valuable than circumstantial reality, is accessible only to those who have had the experience that George describes in the prelude. While in a state of desperation and artistic paralysis, the poet is visited by an angel who not only restores to him his creativity but even leads it to heights never before attained and out of reach to those who follow the traditional sources for inspiration, Christianity and Greek Antiquity (5: 18). The angel represents the artistic part of the poet's ego which enables him to create the art which brings to life the tapestry of life.

The "angelic" part of the poet's being can be compared to the superhuman part of everybody's being that Nietzsche perceived. Following the angel is thus equivalent to following one's sublimated passions, and the inspired poet is equivalent if not to a superman, at least to a member of the "higher type." Thus the poet is no longer subjected to the moral standards of his non-inspired fellow-beings.[12]

George had given expression to this rejection of traditional moral values as impediment to the creation of his art already in his poetry collection *Algabal*, published in 1892, a fantasy about the Roman emperor Heliogabalus:

> Through the creation of *his* Algabal, . . . George established a surrogate *persona*, an intensification of the possibilities latent within himself, to express, in his stead, the totally amoral artist and man (Metzger, 61).

The justification of the narrator's amorality in *Der Teppich des Lebens* is, however, very different from *Algabal*. The persona of the Roman emperor had served George to praise hedonism and immorality for the sake of an increased ecstatic pleasure in life (c.f. "Becher am Boden," 2: 104 - 05), whereas the immorality praised in *Der Teppich des Lebens* is the supposedly necessary prerequisite for the creation of a better and more valuable art. George's art thus implicitly stands above normal human beings and their moral evaluations. It is an art inspired by a higher force and demanding specially equipped people to appreciate it. Through his work the poet becomes a prophet of a higher reality which finds expression in his art. He is "an especially chosen instrument of a spiritual power whose will he carrie[s] out" (Goldsmith, 31). Considering George's temporal and philosophical closeness to Nietzsche, it is not surprising that George, too,

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[12]The best evidence of this attitude can be found in the poem "Der Taeter" (5: 49), in which George debates the experience of contemplating fraternal murder.

was concerned with the philosopher in his creative work.[13]

George's most important publication about the philosopher is his poem "Nietzsche" which first appeared in the *Blaetter* of 1901 - immediately after Nietzsche's death - and was later incorporated into *Der Siebente Ring* (6/7: 12 - 13). The poem is paradigmatic for the way in which George interpreted and misrepresented the philosopher. Even though he refers to Nietzsche as "redeemer" ("Erloeser") and as "thunderer who was singular,".[14] George laments that Nietzsche had essentially been a failure. The poem accuses Nietzsche of having misperceived his task, so that instead of guiding the people to a better spiritual existence, his works only had the effect of "blunted lightnings" ("stumpfe blitze"). The result is general frustration; nothing has been improved - "below, the crowd trots in dumbness" - but Nietzsche had to pay a high price for his error - "he went from long night to longest night."[15]

George's misunderstanding of Nietzsche is revealed most clearly in the poem's third stanza in which George discusses the reason for Nietzsche's failure, "You created gods onlytotopple them"[16] George praises Nietzsche for his highly important statement, "God is dead," but then accuses him of having been unable to replace the dead Christian God with a new one who would inspire the people to create a physical representation of the spiritual realm of beauty. However, the statement "God is dead" does not at all mean that one divine power has faded away and a new one is about to take its place. Nietzsche stated very clearly in *Die froehliche Wissenschaft* that the death of God is an event caused by human beings: "We are all his murderers" (*Wisdom*, 167).[17]

George thus totally misunderstands the core of Nietzsche's teachings. According to Nietzsche, a new world order will be brought about by human beings who have become

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[13]Raschel (10 - 12) lists the following publications referring to Nietzsche in the *Blaetter fuer die Kunst*: Carl August Klein, "Ueber Stefan George," I (1892): 45 - 50; Stefan George, "Ueber Kraft," III (1896): 31; "Blaetter fuer die Kunst" [editorial], III (1896): 129 - 32; Stefan George, "Nietzsche," V (1901): 5 - 6; Karl Wolfskehl, "Zarathustra," V (1901): 7; "Blaetter fuer die Kunst" [editorial], VIII (1909): 1 - 7; Albert Verwey, "An Friedrich Nietzsche," IX (1910): 44 - 45.

[14] "Donnerer - . . . der einzig war." The translation of "Nietzsche" by Marx and Morwitz (*Works*, 219) is very unsatisfactory. The translations from the poem are my own.

[15]"Bloed trabt die menge drunten;" "[er] ging aus langer nacht zur laengsten nacht."

[16]"Erschufst du goetter nur um sie zu stuerzen."

[17]"Wir alle sind seine Moerder" (12: 156).

gods, and not, as George claims, by new gods who will guide the people. The question arises, why George's poem after all contains the following praise for Nietzsche: "For a while, pious silence may yet reign / But then you stand shining before the ages / Like other leaders with a blood-stained crown."[18] The answer lies in the role that George had devised for Nietzsche within the fiction of his own self-glorification. In the fourth stanza George presents Nietzsche as having eventually strayed so far from the right path in his search for new gods that it was too late even for the only one who could have led him back to the true path to wisdom - Stefan George himself.

Nietzsche is thus presented as a precursor of George without whom the philosopher's life would would have been futile. George will complete the task which Nietzsche had only been able to prophesy. As George had established in *Der Teppich des Lebens*, only a poet who follows his inner force can achieve the highest level of revelation. This relationship between the two authors becomes particularly interesting if one takes into consideration that Nietzsche had created as his *alter ego* Zarathustra, the prophet of the superman. If Nietzsche inadvertently becomes the prophet of George, then George can be interpreted as the superman who will redeem the world and give it meaning.[19]

Nietzsche is thus primarily the prophet of George, but he also serves as a warning. He had not only delivered a partially flawed message, which George has come to set right, but had also remained alone in his undertakings, eventually ending in total failure, insanity. George claimed to have learned from this example and to know which mistakes to avoid. Thus he gave expression to the higher truth in song and not in speech, and he did not remain alone. He saw himself as a person who would be able to combine worldly and metaphysical influences. To aid him in conveying the divine message - in this case, the "angelic" aesthetics - to the world, he gathered like-minded disciples around him. These disciples came together in the so-called George-Kreis (George circle) with which George may have tried to emulate Mallarme's circle. Another reason for the creation of the circle was George's desire for power over other people which he

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[18]"Noch eine weile walte fromme stille . . . / Dann aber stehst du strahlend vor den zeiten / Wie andere fuehrer mit der blutigen krone."

[19]This conclusion, although logical from a Nietzschean point of view, is too coherently Nietzschean to be applied to George without qualification. Two yearslater, George presented himself as the only prophet of the new deity that he claimed to have encountered in the human guise of the young Maximilian Kronberger, "the god Maximin." Raschel argues that this self-perception was already developed by the time that George wrote the "Nietzsche" poem (38).

summarized himself in the words, "I cannot live my life but in absolute external domination."[20] The members of the George circle addressed George as "Master" and referred to him as "genius of our time" ("Genius unserer Tage;" Landmann, 6). George led the group almost dictatorically, deciding who was worthy of taking part in the meetings and of being published in the *Blaetter*. In spite of this attitude George was able to count impressive artists among his followers, such as Karl Wolfskehl, Friedrich Gundolf, the Dutch poet Albert Verwey, and the painter Melchior Lechter.

The Nietzsche poems by Wolfskehl and Verwey also give clear evidence how the George circle reduced Nietzsche from the philosopher of the eternal recurrence, the will to power, and the overcoming of the self into the prophet of a superman who supposedly already exists in the person of Stefan George. This misrepresentation stems from a neglect of all of Nietzsche's works except *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, and even from that work only those parts were accepted which paralleled George's ideas. The only other work of Nietzsche's that the Georgeans would refer to is *Die Geburt der Tragoedie*, although Nietzsche later refuted that work. A closer reading of the Georgean writings on Nietzsche makes clear that the Neo-Romantics were not interested in the philosophy *per se* but only in the way in which elements of it could be used to make the most outstanding figure of contemporary thought into a precursor of Stefan George.

The man closest to George for a long time was Friedrich Gundolf. Twelve years younger than George, he accepted the latter as guide and idol from their first meeting in 1899. Beginning late in 1898, Gundolf studied German literature and art history in Munich. Gundolf never questioned George, and even wrote to him,

> I am the man to make all your original thoughts and experiences the common part of German education in the best sense, i.e. of the German youth. I feel

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[20]"Ich kann mein leben nicht leben es sei denn in der vollkommnen aeussern oberherrlichkeit" (Boehringer, 92). (Letter to Sabine Lepsius, April 1905. My translation). More than anything else, the circle was an instrument for George to give additional expression to his artistic and philosophical tenets. How little independence he was willing to give to his followers can be seen in his poem "Der Juenger" ("The Disciple"), which ends, "Und wenn er allen lohnes mich entbloesste: / Mein lohn ist in den blicken meines Herrn /Sind andre reicher: ist mein Herr der groesste / Ich folgte meinem groessten Herrn" (5:51). ("And if he gave me no reward, my guerdon / Is in a glance accorded by my lord, / There may be richer, but my lord is sovereign, / I shall not leave my sovereign lord") (*Works*, 191). The extent of the demanded submission is evident from the fact that the disciple capitalizes only "Herr", thus almost ascribing a divine power to his lord.

from many signs that this is my duty and right.[21]

It was probably Friedrich Gundolf who introduced Felix Paul Greve to several members of the circle, though not to George himself, during late 1901 and early 1902. Gundolf, the gifted scholar and published poet who was already acquiring the literary reputation that Greve sought, was a likely model for the impressionable Greve who had met him in university in Munich.

Felix Paul Greve's artistic career began with the publication of his poetry collection *Wanderungen*. Although he had not yet published a poem in any of the many small journals in existence at the time, Greve apparently felt qualified to present a whole collection of his verse to a larger audience. The external details of *Wanderungen* indicate Greve's aspirations. He had his book printed at his own expense and then gave it to an art store in Munich where it was sold on commission. As printer he chose Otto von Holten in Berlin who printed nearly everything that George and his disciples published. When Greve asked von Holten to print his book, he acted as if he were already a member of the circle.

Several of the poems also give evidence of the extent to which Greve was willing to emulate, even copy, George. Most of the poems are the rhymed quatrains preferred by George, but Greve provides more variety and less strict organization than the "Master." He includes a narrative poem of 42 quatrains, "Sage" ("Legend"), and in several sections, particularly the one on women, Greve ventures into topics that George avoided. Yet at the same time Greve publishes poems that George himself might have written. The twelve quatrains of "Caesarische Zeit," particularly the last one, could easily have found their place in *Algabal*:

> But suddenly with waking gesture
> A mad lustre breaks from your eye:
> I am the only human on this earth,
> And all life is a mummery.[22]

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[21]"Ich [bin] der Mann, all deine Urgedanken und Urerlebnisse zum Gemeingut der deutschen Gesamtbildung im besten Sinn, d.h. der deutschen Jugend zu machen. Ich merke es an manchen Zeichen, dass dies mein Amt und Recht ist" (Boehringer and Landmann, eds., 211). (My translation)

[22]"Doch ploetzlich mit erwachender Geberde / Aus deinem Auge bricht ein irrer Glanz / Ich bin der einzige Mensch auf dieser Erde, / Und alles Leben ist ein Mummenschanz" (13). This and all subsequent translations from Greve's poetry are my own.

The five poems of Greve's "Wanderungen" section echo several of George's in the "Vorspiel" of *Der Teppich des Lebens*, particularly the fifth one, and like George, Greve includes poems about classical monuments. Greve's imitation of George is evident also in his use of the word "Ferge," which is an unusual archaism for "Faehrmann" (ferryman) and is used only in George's native Rhineland, not in the northern Germany of Greve's youth. The angel in George's "Vorspiel" had introduced himself, "Now I am your friend, and guard and guide" (*Works*, 172);[23] the narrator in "Und wieder lockst du mich" laments, "But oh, I miss him, fearless ferryman / Who'd lead me backward on the stream of times."[24] Greve's use of the word may indicate to George that the young poet looked to him for this guidance, ready to accept the "Master's" rule.

The poem that most clearly documents the influences that Greve acknowledged at the time when he was writing *Wanderungen* is undoubtedly "Den Meistern" ("To the Masters"). The speaker casts himself in the traditional role of the hermit who has shut himself off from the world in a romantic environment and allows only special figures into his realm. He admits four of them, each a well-known artist who represents his craft. These four, comprising the four corners of the hermit's world, are the poet Stefan George, who claimed to have found the key to a romantic future in classical Antiquity; the composer Ludwig van Beethoven, who linked the classical and the romantic phases in German music; the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, whose classical figure of Zarathustra predicted the superman of the future; and the painter Arnold Boecklin, whose paintings of mythological figures recreated the world of ancient Greece in the late nineteenth century.

Two of the "Masters," Arnold Boecklin and Friedrich Nietzsche, are given additional poems. The two had already been celebrated in poems by Wolfskehl and George respectively in the *Blaetter fuer die Kunst* in 1901. A comparison of the poems by George and Greve shows significant differences in evaluation. George praised Boecklin,[25] but expressed reservations about Nietzsche, whereas Greve's judgment is the

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[23]"Ich bin freund und fuehrer dir und ferge" (5: 18).

[24]"Doch ach, er fehlt der unerschrockne Ferge / Der auf der Zeiten Strom mich rueckwaerts fuehre" (26).

[25]In his poem on Boecklin, published in the *Blaetter* of 1903, George would praise the painter as the preserver of beauty in a dark age: "Because of you we stand with lifted foreheads / Instead of weeping through a barren darkness, / And only you - O warder, thanks! - protected / The sacred fire through an age of ice") (*Works*, 220). ("Dass heut wir leichten Hauptes wandeln duerfen / Nicht arm im dunkel schluchzen war dein walten: / Du nur verwehrtest dass uns [dank dir Waechter!] / In kalter zeit das heilige feuer losch.")

reverse. Although admitting a certain fascination with Boecklin's art, the poem ends in questions. Nietzsche, however, is embraced wholeheartedly. These different evaluations of Boecklin give evidence that Greve retained a considerable amount of independent thinking which balances his admiration of George evident in other poems. Independently of other factors such as his low social status, this expressed mental independence definitely prevented Greve from being completely accepted by the Georgeans.

Greve's "Nietzsche" poem reveals an unbridgeable distance from George's evaluation. Greve had already selected Nietzsche as the first of the "Masters" and had associated him with the rising of the sun. In "Friedrich Nietzsche" the sun imagery is repeated. The philosopher is compared to "the sun that blessingly shone golden lights" and which through its existence makes possible "a glimpse of future life."[26] This is the Nietzsche who wrote *Zarathustra*, not the one whom George mediated into his own flawed precursor. The Nietzsche of this poem does not need anybody to complete his already perfect vision which can only be interpreted. Thus George cannot claim to be more than the best artistic interpreter of Nietzsche's inspiring vision.

Wanderungen contains even further evidence of Greve's knowledge and admiration of Nietzsche's writings. The section "Aus hohen Bergen," consisting of the long poems "Irrfahrt" ("Erratic Wandering") and "Sage," is clearly inspired by Nietzsche. "Irrfahrt" is a response to the poem "Aus hohen Bergen" with which Nietzsche had concluded *Jenseits von Gut und Boese*. The narrator of Nietzsche's poem withdrew to the mountains and there overcame himself but now longs for the companionship of other supermen. Greve's narrator accidentally finds the path into this superman's realm but is rejected because his wish to stay is motivated by human vanity and "here for human striving is no space."[27] Yet after his removal to human habitation, the narrator sets out to repeat the journey, acknowledging the higher value of life in the "Geisterreich" ("realm of spirits") which one can only reach "rejecting word and advice of safe leaders."[28]

In "Sage" Greve narrates the attempts of brute peasants to subjugate an eagle which is eventually rescued by a resurrected old sage. Fear and destruction are the consequences that the peasants have to bear for their attempt to tame and abuse the

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[26]"Die Sonne[, die] segnend goldne Lichter streute;" "Ein Blick von kuenftgem Leben" (53).
[27]"Hier ist fuer menschlich Streben keine Bahn" (33).
[28] "[Hat man] mit Uebermenschlichem gerungen / Verachtend sichrer Fuehrer Wort und Rat" (32).

higher force of life symbolized by the eagle.

Greve's publications of 1901/02 make clear not only that he had read at least *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, *Jenseits von Gut und Boese*, and *Der Wille zur Macht*, but also that he read Nietzsche without being influenced by the Georgean misreading. Thus he was able, at this early stage in his career, to give an appropriate artistic interpretation of Nietzsche that does not misrepresent the philosopher's ideas.

In its totality, *Wanderungen* reveals a young poet desirous of spiritual guidance yet at the same time very insecure about which authority to accept. He obviously tried to win the favor of the Georgeans but did not seem to realize that the manner in which he embraced Nietzsche at the same time alienated him from them. He would have had to proclaim Stefan George, not Friedrich Nietzsche, as the highest authority for spiritual guidance to be ideologically acceptable for the Georgeans. Greve wavered in confusion between two poles of attraction. Eventually he would have to come to a clear decision, but at the time of *Wanderungen*, he was still at the stage of unreflecting imitation.[29]

Resolving the contradictions in his personal philosophy was seemingly less urgent for Greve than his pursuit of literary fame. In May, 1902, only three months after *Wanderungen*, Otto von Holten once again printed verse for Greve, and Jakob Littauer once again sold these Georgean quatrains on commission in his art store. This time, Greve offered a verse drama, entitled *Helena und Damon*. In this short dialogue between the serene and withdrawn Damon and the worldly Helena, Greve again gives his male protagonist the pose of the thinker remote from ordinary human beings. Damon's perception of himself as a person invested with special qualities culminates in his statement,

> Very early into my children's cradle
> The evil fairy laid the curse of thought.
> Thus I will always, in fight and victory,
> In pleasure and pain, I will be lonely.[30]

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[29]*Wanderungen* created hardly any public response. The only review was very unfavorable. It appeared in *Die Insel*, a periodical published by one of those *Jugendstil* factions that had little sympathy for George and his art. Otto J. Bierbaum has nothing positive to say about Greve's poems; and he ends his review with a general condemnation of the George movement, calling it "empty Aestheticism" ("leeres Aesthetentum"), the authors - in this case Felix Paul Greve - "Aesthetes without taste" ("Aestheten ohne Geschmack") (196).

[30]"Mir legte frueh schon in die Kindeswiege / Die boese Fei des Denkens Fluch hinein. / So werd ich stets, im Kampfe wie im Siege, / In Lust und Leiden

But eventually Damon is redeemed when Helena declares her love for him and he realizes his own for her. This turn of events enables him to leave his quasi-royal realm - which strongly resembles the garden in "Den Meistern" - and to accept Helena as his guide.

> No human foot has entered my realm,
> It is a garden which you have built for me,
> Where on the colorful scented rows of blossoms
> I see spring's eternal dew.
>
> The light crown of roses I take
> From my head and present it to you;
> I step down from my royal throne
> And put it into my queen's hair."[31]

Rather than seeking the bliss of a supernatural sphere, Damon accepts the rewards of earthly life - a conclusion that will not have endeared Greve to the ascetic "Master" Stefan George and his closest followers.

Helena und Damon was the last verse that Greve published using the tenets of the George circle. Greve was still interested in becoming a major figure in Aestheticist poetry and submitted some of his poems to the *Blaetter fuer die Kunst* in August 1902, but George, who had the final decision in all matters regarding the *Blaetter*, rejected Greve's submission as "too little to serve as introduction."[32] Furthermore, other things were on Greve's mind. As stated earlier, Greve tried to imitate Oscar Wilde not only as artist but also in his lifestyle. Greve's problem was that he was neither a successful artist nor the son of rich parents. Consequently he had to borrow large sums of money to support the extravagant life that he desired. He had begun to earn money through

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[30](cont'd) werd ich einsam sein" (24).

[31]"Mein Reich hat keines Menschen Fuss betreten, / Ein Garten ist's, den du mir aufgebaut, / Wo auf den bunten duften Bluetenbeeten / Das ewige Nass des jungen Fruehlings taut. / Von meinem Haupt die helle Rosenkrone / Nehm ich herab und bringe sie dir dar; / Ich steige nieder von dem Koenigsthrone / Und leg sie meiner Koenigin aufs Haar" (39).

[32]"Zu wenig um als einfuehrungs-beitrag zu gelten." (Boehringer and Landmann, eds., 120; my translation). George's comment leaves open whether Greve's submission was deficient in quality or quantity, but considering the fact that the *Blaetter* rarely printed more than three poems by one author in a single issue, one can conclude that George was dissatisfied with the quality of the poetry.

translations as early as the summer of 1902, but it was not enough. In May, 1903, his main creditor sued Greve who was sentenced to a year in jail. Instead of living the easy life of a dandy and artist, Greve found himself behind bars (Spettigue, *European Years*, 93 - 99).

During the twelve months that he spent in prison in Bonn, Felix Paul Greve seems to have realized that his precarious situation was the consequence of his unthinking imitation of decadent Aestheticism, a movement which he, like many others, associated closely with the figure of Oscar Wilde. A comparison of the two essays on Oscar Wilde that Greve wrote in 1903 gives clear evidence of his internal debate about the values of Aestheticism. *Oscar Wilde*, dated Palermo, March 1903, was completed just before Greve's arrest, *Randarabesken zu Oscar Wilde* was written just after Greve had begun his jail term and is dated Bonn, October 1903.

Oscar Wilde is a byproduct of Greve's translations of *Intentions* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, published by JCC Bruns in 1902 and 1903 respectively. The essay, a relatively uncritical summary of Wilde's views on art and life, begins with the central dogma of Wildean aesthetics: "The work of art is its own goal. All art is without purpose, immoral, because it does not want to influence life."[33] This dichotomy between art and life underlies the argument of the essay in which Greve sees his British idol destroyed by his inability to choose between the two poles: "He realized more and more that one cannot serve two masters - life and art. He should have chosen and he did not do it."[34] The result of Wilde's indecisiveness is an oeuvre that Greve has to consider very uneven. He praises "The Sphinx," "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," and *Salome* which were written without the public taste in mind, but thinks badly of the comedies which were primarily written for money (12). Greve sees the reason for Wilde's artistic decline in the fact that "in the early nineties, Wilde had exhausted the possibilities of his dreamer's life."[35] He was forced to write for money, having to make concessions to the public taste and thus to corrupt his pure artistry.

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[33]"Das Kunstwerk ist sein eigenes Ziel. Alle Kunst ist zwecklos, unmoralisch, denn sie will nicht auf das Leben wirken." (3). (My translation)
[34]"Immer mehr sah er ein, dass man nicht zwei Herren dienen kann, dem Leben und der Kunst. Er haette waehlen muessen und hat es nicht getan" (12). (My translation)
[35]"Wilde hatte im Anfang der neunziger Jahre die Moeglichkeiten seines Traeumerlebens erschoepft" (11).(My translation).

The tone of the essay is essentially a mixture of admiration and pity. As long as Wilde had been able to pursue his artistic dream without any interferences, he could have attained the rank of "an artistically immature giant."[36] and Greve displays considerable pity for the fate of a man whose life he sees as paradigmatic for the difficulties of the artistic existence.

> It is the hieroglyphic account of a great tragedy in the life of a modern man, of a man who did and did not want to be an artist, who wanted to live and could not because he confused life and dream.[37]

Greve portrays Wilde as a man "from whom we have much to learn."[38] Staying in Sicily and living the dream of artistic freedom from all worldly concerns, it was easy for Greve to imply that Wilde was wrong when he attempted to balance the two poles of artistic dream and factual life. The lesson that Greve implies, namely that the artist has to choose the dream without any concessions to life shows that Greve himself was still dreaming. But he would soon wake up.

Randarabesken zu Oscar Wilde, written only about six months later, reveals a very different attitude in the author. *Oscar Wilde* had ended on the note that Greve would be able to learn the lesson of Wilde's failure and structure his own life according to this insight. But *Randarabesken* begins with the prefatory remark,

> I say expressly that the remarks that I will make on the following pages make necessary the reader's acquaintance with my little pamphlet, *Oscar Wilde*, and that it is intended to correct, yes, refute that pamphlet in a few points.[39]

While *Oscar Wilde* had been an attempt at a scholarly portrait of Wilde marred by an acknowledged lack of distance from the subject, *Randarabesken* is a very personal response to Greve's problem: waking up from his artistic dream, he, too, had gone to prison. More than anything else, *Randarabesken* is a highly personal debate about the validity of Wilde's approach to art and life.

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[36]"Eines kuenstlerisch unausgereiften Riesen" (40)(My translation).
[37]"Es ist die Hieroglyphenschrift einer grossen Tragoedie im Leben eines modernen Menschen, eines Menschen, der Kuenstler sein wollte und nicht sein wollte, der leben wollte und es nicht konnte, weil er das Leben mit dem Traum verwechselt" (43). My translation).
[38]"Von dem wir vieles zu lernen haben" (44). (My translation).
[39]"Ich sage ausdruecklich, dass die Bemerkungen, die ich im folgenden gebe, die Bekanntschaft mit meiner kleinen Broschuere *Oscar Wilde*. . . voraussetzen, und jene Broschuere in ein paar Punkten berichtigen, ja, widerrufen soll" (iii). All translations from *Randarabesken* are my own.

Greve had begun *Oscar Wilde* with Wilde's statement that art intends to hide the artist, making his exploration of the artist's life distinctly subsidiary to any consideration of his art. But now that Greve had to experience very drastically that the artist is also involved in practical life, his position is the reverse: "With Wilde, his works are only aids for me to divine a human being behind them."[40] Real life had caught up with Greve in the same manner as with Wilde, upon whom Greve had attempted to model his own pursuits. Now Wilde is no longer the pitiable and unfulfilled artistic genius frustrated by life but rather a vampire and mysterious demon (1 - 2) who haunts Greve and appears responsible for his miserable state in life.

Now that he has experienced both poles of existence, the preferred life of university student and dilettante artist as well as life in prison, Greve is able to analyze the reasons for Wilde's failure - and his own:

> He put his genius into his life and made himself king of life, . . . of a shadowy life, a dream life, if you will, but at any rate of the only life that Wilde acknowledges, and of a life full of color and splendor and shining fire. Always as artist and among artists.[41]

Thus even that which Wilde perceived as life was not real life, but rather a life mitigated by the artistic dream. The consequence of this confusion was drastic: "He confused dream and reality, and life took revenge for this."[42]

Randarabesken almost becomes a self-portrait. The essay begins and ends with Greve's hope to write the definitive Oscar Wilde biography one day. Greve is supposedly able to do this and to warrant everything he writes because Wilde told him everything himself. Greve had known Wilde, "not in life . . . but still. . . ."[43] He had known Wilde in the artistic dream and is his younger brother in spirit. At the time that he writes *Randarabesken*, Greve himself is what Wilde eventually became, "A dandy who finally

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[40]"Bei Wilde sind mir seine Werke nur noch Hilfsmittel, einen Menschen dahinter zu erraten" (12).

[41]"Er hat sein Genie in sein Leben gelegt, und sich zum Koenig des Lebens gemacht, . . . eines Schattenlebens, eines Traumlebens, wenn man will, aber jedenfalls des einzigen Lebens, das Wilde anerkennt, und eines Lebens voll Farbe und Glanz und strahlender Glut. Immer als Kuenstler und unter Kuenstlern" (19).

[42]"Da verwechselte er den Traum und die Dinge, und dafuer raechte das Leben sich" (36).

[43]"Im Leben nicht . . . und doch. . ." (6). The ellipses are Greve's.

faces himself in shock."[44] Oscar Wilde is still somebody from whom Greve thinks he can learn a lesson, but now this lesson is the opposite of what it had been six months earlier. Instead of rejecting life, Greve now attempts to come to terms with it, having learned that "life is the most merciless creditor,"[45] and having learned it almost as painfully as Wilde himself.

Wilde served as a model for Greve yet one more time when Greve read *De Profundis* which was first published in *Die neue Rundschau* of January and February, 1905, only a few months after Greve came out of jail.[46] *De Profundis* is of rather dubious merit. Philippe Jullian even doubted the value of the work in which Wilde equates his own suffering with that of Jesus (932) - something that Greve had already done in *Randarabesken* (1) - by referring to it as "[Wilde's] own hagiography" (281). But *De Profundis* is nevertheless a significant document of an attempt to restore the self-confidence and self-esteem he has lost because of prison. In Wilde's apologia Greve came across a familiar concept when he read,

> that beautiful unreal world of Art where I once was King, and would have remained King indeed, had I not let myself be lured into the imperfect world of coarse uncompleted passion, of appetite without distinction, desire without limit, and formless greed (909).

In his self-analysis, Wilde thus concludes that his downfall was due to his inability to control his passions. The ideas that giving in to passions is destructive and that such human weakness has to be overcome for the achievement of happiness are the same as those at the core of the Nietzschean concept of the superman. It is only a small step to connect Wilde's statement with the one Nietzsche made in *Der Wille zur Macht*:

> The passions often lead to disaster - therefore, they are evil and ought to be condemned. Man must wring himself free from them, otherwise he cannot be a *good* man. . . . *Conquest over the passions*? No, not if this is to mean their enfeeblement and annihilation. *They must be enlisted in our service.* . . . At length we should trust them enough to restore their freedom to them: they love us like good servants, and willingly go wherever our best interests lie (*Will*, 306

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[44]"Ein Dandy, der schliesslich erschuettert vor sich selber steht!" (49).
[45]"Das Leben ist der unerbittlichste Glaeubiger" (40).
[46]Greve explicitly referred to *De Profundis* in his essay "Oscar Wilde und das Drama" (30, 31), published in 1908.

- 07).[47]

Like Wilde, Greve could argue that this particular fate had befallen him because he had taken on a lifestyle which implied that the creation of art needed not the overcoming but the giving in to passions.

In *Oscar Wilde*, Greve had still quoted affirmatively his idol's pronouncement, "The only way of getting rid of a temptation is giving in to it."[48] But in *Randarabesken*, he rejects this view as an "error" and asks, "Don't you cheat yourself?"[49] Considering his own experience and Wilde's, Greve centers his self-analysis on his giving in to his passions without thinking of the consequences in real life. In his attempt to find a satisfying approach to life and art, Greve rejects not only the idea that giving in to passions is a prerequisite for a good life but also that it is a prerequisite for creativity. Characteristically, Greve falls from one extreme to the other. Rejecting the artistic dream altogether, he accepts factual reality and the manner in which it was usually depicted in literary works of the time. Within little more than a year, the aestheticist poet Felix Paul Greve thus becomes a novelist using the technique of literary naturalism.

The extent to which Greve's perception of the interrelationship of art and life changed during these months becomes evident from the rubric of his first novel, *Fanny Essler*:

> All true art addresses itself to the masses: even when its 'public' is not a part of the masses. No true art betrays a judgment on the part of the artist. All true art is, in the strictest sense of the word, moral (1: 4).

The art of *Fanny Essler* is moral because the book is an attempt to present factual reality as accurately as possible. The plot is not pure fiction but rather a fictionalized account of the life of Greve's companion during those years, Elsa Endell (Hjartarson, "Of Greve," 276); and following the conventions of realist-naturalist fiction, Greve devotes long passages to the description of characters and places. Occasionally, the story is almost

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[47]"Die Begierden richten oft grosses Unheil an, - folglich sind sie boese, verwerflich. Der Mensch muss los von ihnen kommen: eher kann er nicht ein *guter* Mensch sein. . . . *Ueberwindung der Affekte*? - Nein, wenn es Schwaeche und Vernichtung derselben bedeuten soll. *Sondern in Dienst nehmen*. . . . Endlich gibt man ihnen eine vertrauensvolle Freiheit wieder: sie lieben uns wie gute Diener und gehen freiwillig dorthin, wo unser Bestes hin will" (18: 267 - 68).

[48]"Der einzige Weg, eine Versuchung loszuwerden, ist, dass man ihr nachgibt" (20).

[49]"Trugschluss;" Betruegst du dich nicht selber?" (17).

drowned in this "wealth of well-observed minutiae" (Riley, "German Novels," 56). The following example, taken from an account of a walk in central Berlin, is typical of Greve's method:

> At the opera house they turned around, walked back along Unter den Linden and turned into Friedrichs-Strasse again, this time going as far as Leipziger Strasse, Koeniggraetzer Strasse, Unter den Linden und Friedrichs-Strasse. They hardly spoke to each other (1: 108).

Like all realist-naturalist novels, *Fanny Essler* attempts to evoke the impression that it is not fiction but an account of reality, a reality in which the external circumstances are the most important influences upon a character's fate. Pascal's summary of the basic elements of German naturalist fiction quoted above (p.48) applies also to *Fanny Essler*. Greve perceives life as determined largely by external reality, and in his novel portrays a character unwilling and unable to understand the influences of this reality. To a certain extent, *Fanny Essler* is thus also an autobiographical, possibly even cathartic, exploration into the origins of the "Katastrophe" (*Letters*, 526) in Greve's own life.

From the beginning of the novel, Greve points out that Fanny satisfies her passions and pursues her dreams instead of confronting real life. In *Fanny Essler*, as in most of his later Canadian novels, Greve uses sexuality as the central example of passionate behavior. The novel opens just after Fanny has given in to her physical passion for Baron Bruno von Langen. She had obviously not reflected about the practical consequences of this event which will alter her life radically. To her it is clear that "now they belonged together. He had to marry her" (1: 29). Yet it is obvious to everybody but her that she is socially unacceptable to the baron's family. Instead of becoming a baroness, "according to [bourgeois] morality, she [has been] dishonoured" (1: 35).

The importance of Fanny's physical passions becomes clear not only from her later drifting from lover to lover in disregard of the bourgeois morality which, after all, forms an essential part of her heritage (1: 35), but particularly from her marriage. Initially, Eduard Barrel appears as an almost ideal husband for her: "In him she would find what she needed most: firm guidance and patient waiting" (2: 117). But after the wedding night, when he is unable to satisfy her physically, "she gave up" (2: 121). The consequence of their physical incompatibility is "a total breakdown of all relationships normally found between people" (2: 132), regardless of the fact that her husband tries to provide Fanny with all other things she appears to need. She can even ask him to find

her a suitable lover (2: 141). Although she is aware that her husband has many things to offer – "Now she was Mrs. Barrel: that was at least something" (2: 172) – she abandons him for the man who she thinks will satisfy her physical needs, even though he appears to her "to come from a different world altogether" (2: 181). Eventually it becomes evident that Reelen has no use for her and is not interested in fulfilling her other needs. But it is already too late for a return to a different existence. Through her unthinking pursuit of her passions, Fanny makes happiness seem impossible and death the best solution (2: 232).

More even than a follower of her passions, Fanny is a dreamer: "She was a Sunday's child; she was a princess waiting for her fairy prince. She knew he would come" (1: 31). In her incredible naivete, she not only believes that the first man who is friendly to her in Berlin is her prince (1: 80), but persists in believing in her dream even after Axel Dahl, as well as several other lovers, have turned out to be ordinary selfish men rather than fantastic princes. After her expulsion from Cottbus, she seems to have learned her lesson: "How many of all these dreams had she been able to make come true! None! And what had she come to at last? Only to disgust" (1: 230). But this insight does not last long. Her next lover, Nepomuk Bolle, is stingier than any of his predecessors, and her next "prince," Eberhard Stein – whom she believes to be the prince without ever having spoken to him (2: 43 – 49) – treats her worse than anybody else.

The point at which the fates of Fanny Essler and Felix Paul Greve coincide is their inability to distinguish between life and art. Just as Greve had abandoned his scholarly pursuits in favor of aestheticist poetry, Fanny "longed for the world of real life: the theatre" (1: 131) and later attempts to become a painter. Like her author, Fanny is unable to see that the world of art is to a large extent a world of masks and poses and that its laws are different from, even opposite to, those of the real world. Greve had believed in the reality of the artistic world and found himself in prison for fraud; Fanny's belief in her artistic dream makes her an ageing courtesan. Greve had learned his lesson during his year in prison. The novel's emphasis on circumstantial reality signifies that Greve tried seriously to replace the fateful artistic dream with something substantial as the basis of his life. He gives Fanny a similar opportunity, her marriage to Eduard Barrel, but she is unable to compromise sufficiently with reality. She abandons the way out of her drifting existence in favor of yet another dreamprince, Friedrich Karl Reelen. Greve may even have intended Fanny's fate as a warning to himself not to make the

same mistake again. Having grown up in relative seclusion from the hardships of life – Fanny reads *Egyptian Princess*, Greve studied classical Philology – neither of them had been prepared to face the difficulties of life. Fanny's dreams of finding a prince are as realistic as Greve's of inventing airplanes (*Letters*, 539). Exploring the failures of Fanny's existence, Greve also inquired into the dangers to his own life which he was trying to rebuild.

In *Fanny Essler* Greve also took issue with the temptation to live the artistic dream. For this purpose, Greve created Fanny's affair with Nepomuk Bolle, a very obvious and hostile caricature of Stefan George. Bolle is an absolutely self-centered egotist who talks only about his art, writes his letters in capitals, and makes statements such as "do not think that I am as other mortals are" (2: 15). But Nepomuk Bolle is basically nothing but a pompous and heartless man who with "a nasty smile on his lips" (2: 31) refuses to give Fanny the financial support he knows she needs. Neither his lifestyle not his art have any depth. In order to enhance his reputation, Bolle, like George, celebrates Nietzsche. But this celebration insults the philosopher. In truth Bolle celebrates himself, abusing Nietzsche in the process. Fanny alone is undeceived by the ridiculous pseudo-artistic and pseudo-ritual framework of the meetings.

> Mr. Bolle began; he read the fourth part of *Zarathustra*. . . . She saw Mr. Bolle out of the corner of her eye: how purplish he looks! she thought. And so bloated! Just like a raging bull. . . . My God! she thought: you'd think he'd be embarrassed, shouting 'Hee haw' like that (2: 45 – 46).

Bolle's audience, however, is held in rapt attention, incapable of realizing that precious texts – Goethe is apparently treated in the same manner (2: 37 – 38) – are abused for deluded and selfish ends and are made to serve a function the opposite of their intentions.

Greve absolutely condemns this decadent approach to art and life. The art produced by people such as Bolle is shallow and worthless, they misrepresent and even abuse good art for their own selfish ends and thereby threaten its original value, and they even are a pernicious influence on other human beings. Fanny's view of them – and here she very clearly is Greve's mouthpiece – is summarized in her evaluation of her husband, another artist:

> How she despised artists! These half-men who thought themselves God's greatest gift! The gods of dreams: gods in a dream, because they are useless for real life. These arrogant men of hubris . . . out of weakness! (2: 159)

Greve realized that he had attempted to become such a man as well when he had tried to join the aestheticists. To counteract this tendency, and to present an opposite model, Greve created the figure of Friedrich Karl Reelen.

To a certain extent, Reelen is a projection of Greve's aspirations. Reelen not only stands in marked contrast to the artists of Fanny's acquaintance – he "definitely appeared not to fit into this circle of semi-Bohemians" (2: 134) – but he also seems to stand above the worries and shortcomings of ordinary human life. Fanny first perceives Reelen's superiority as physical: "He was an athlete, you only had to look at him. . . . He was no artist!" (2: 159). Consequently she expects him to be capable of satisfying her sexually, and when he does, he appears to be perfect.

But Greve has given Reelen another side, also a consequence of his attempt to rid himself of everything the decadents had stood for. One of his main accusations against people such as Bolle/George had been the use they made of Nietzsche, misrepresenting and abusing him for their own ends. In his reaction against Georgean aesthetics, Greve created as a projection of himself a character true to Nietzschean standards. Reelen is his own master, not only of his material life, but also of his emotions. Fanny thinks of him as being "just like a young Nordic god" (2: 194), and as if he were a god and not a human, he never shows his emotions, if he has any. He passes Fanny's test of satisfying her sexually, but he does not seem to involve himself.

> He hadn't been excited that night as all the others had been: it was almost as if he had been going to work. . . . But he had looked at her almost distantly and there had been nothing else in his somewhat veiled eyes than a determination (2: 194 – 95).

The longer Fanny stays with Reelen, the more she realizes that as his own master he is concerned only with his own interests. She still compares him to a god, but now he is "a god who had come down to satisfy a whim of his with a mortal" (2: 197). She realizes that she is like a decoration to him, not something essential. One of the Nietzschean ideals that Greve expressed in the character of Reelen is the absolute autonomy and self-sufficiency necessary to reach the superhuman state.[50] Thus he cannot give Fanny the human warmth and compassion that she longs for, and he is

[50]Reelen's emphasis on adherence to social conventions indicates that he is not totally self-sufficient yet, but that seems to be the only area in which he lacks self-sufficiency.

unable to give her the feeling of being wanted and needed herself. As a consequence, "they never fused together, they never became one" (2: 212), "there remained a wall that separated her and Friedrich Karl" (2: 216). Reelen's aloofness and self-sufficiency are thus clearly criticized by Greve through Fanny's eyes, and yet "his perfection as gentleman, rich man, sophisticate, epitome of elegance, is never undermined" in the book (Spettigue, "Fanny," 51).

The ideal of rational perfection and self-sufficiency that he created in Reelen was apparently too attractive for Greve to undermine it. Yet at the same time he seems to have been rather suspicious of the emotional coldness that this ideal entailed. The circumstances of Fanny's lonesome death reflect Greve's ambiguous attitude toward Reelen. He abandons her to die miserably, and yet that death *"saved Fanny Essler from the greatest disappointment of her life"* (2: 232). We can only speculate about the nature of this disappointment, but probably it would have been Reelen's rejection of her when he had satisfied his whim with her, leaving her no hope whatsoever.

In *Fanny Essler*, Greve attempted a new beginning for himself. He not only chose naturalist prose over aestheticist verse, but he also analyzed and rejected the reasons that had made him lead a life that eventually brought him to prison, where probably much of the novel was written. In addition, Greve created a hypothetical projection of himself in the character of Friedrich Karl Reelen. The realization of such an existence would probably remain beyond Greve's reach, and his ambiguous portrayal of Reelen shows that Greve himself had doubts about its worth, but it was nevertheless highly significant for his future development. Friedrich Karl Reelen is a prototype for many later Grove characters; Niels Lindstedt, Len Sterner, Abe Spalding, and Edmund Clark all have their roots in Reelen.

Greve's second novel, *Maurermeister Ihles Haus*, is rather weak in comparison to its predecessor. The story of Suse Ihle appears as the first part of Fanny's, but it does not have the autobiographical element that had given *Fanny Essler* additional attraction. The book appears somewhat unfinished, as if it had been rushed to the printer while still in need of considerable revision. Fritz Boeckel gives an apt summary of the novel's shortcomings:

> Greve's novel is no complete unit in which a single inner force pushes forward; it rather provides a series of photographic portraits, held together by the unity

> of the portrayed characters. A leading idea that dominates the development is not evident.[51]

Maurermeister Ihles Haus contains only a few elements that keep it from being a failure, most notably several depictions of landscapes (72 - 73, 77 - 78) and Greve's ability to give a convincing representation of the point of view of an adolescent girl. The latter feature may well be the consequence of Elsa's cooperation.

Maurermeister Ihles Haus is interesting for the study of Grove's oeuvre only because it contains a number of elements that would reappear in his Canadian works. The first of these factors, a clear change from *Fanny Essler*, is the domestic setting. As the title indicates, the emphasis in the book is on the developing relationships of the various members of the Ihle household. In this respect, *Maurermeister Ihles Haus* appears as an earlier version of parts of *Our Daily Bread* and *Fruits of the Earth*.

Even though Suse Ihle is the central character of the novel, her father is the most interesting one. As Blodgett noted, "Richard Ihle is the prototype of Grove's fathers" (134). In his desire to exert his power over everybody in the house - all of them females - Ihle alienates everybody around him and eventually becomes as isolated as John Elliot or Abe Spalding. His eventual physical attack on his daughter only underlines how far his unthinking quest for power has alienated Richard Ihle from the people around him. His daughter will leave him through marriage as her younger sister had done before, and he will be left with nothing in life to be proud of or happy about, a result of his loss of his humanity through his ruthless pursuit of power.

Mrs. Ihle is also a prototype for several later Grove characters, particularly Martha Elliot. Unable to withstand her husband's power, she lives a miserable life of submission that eventually destroys her. Her death after the ball is an early version of Martha Elliot's death. Ruth Spalding and to a certain extent even Clara Lindstedt share Mrs. Ihle's fate.

The prominent roles of young girls in Greve's novels indicate that Elsa Endell had a significant part in their composition. Put together, the two novels can be read as a fictionalized account of Elsa Endell's life until she eloped with Greve to Italy in 1902. In

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[51]"[Greves] Roman ist kein festgeschlossenes Ganze, in dem eine einheitliche innere Kraft vorwaerts treibt; er gibt mehr eine Reihe von photographischen Aufnahmen, zusammengehalten durch die Einheitlichkeit der dargestellten Personen. Ein fuehrender Gedanke, der die Entwicklung beherrscht, tritt nicht hervor" (210). (My translation).

Canada, Elsa was no longer with Grove, and the lack of her influence is clearly noticeable in the Canadian novels which contain no coherently believable female character.

In his review of *Maurermeister Ihles Haus* in 1907, Fritz Boeckel expressed hope in Greve's future works (210). But no further work would be published under Felix Paul Greve's name. Apparently all his energy went into his efforts to repay his debts, mostly through translations, but also through some journalistic work.[52] He also attempted to stay in contact with the literary world, particularly Andre Gide with whom he corresponded until at least 1908 (*Letters*, 547 - 48). But apparently he was unable to solve his problems.

By 1909, Greve seems to have come to the conclusion that he would never be able to give to his life the desired direction. Thus he borrowed a large sum of money, once again from Kilian (Pacey and Mahanti, 25), faked suicide, and disappeared. North America was a fairly obvious choice for him. German emigration to North America had been strong since the 1840s, the myth of the "land of unlimited opportunities" was still largely uncontested, and Greve had speculated about the consequences of an emigration to North America already in *Randarabesken*. He may have hoped for a new start for his life like Karl Rossmann in Franz Kafka's *Amerika*, written two years after Greve attempted to leave his old existence behind him.

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[52]In 1909, Greve published an essay, "Reise in Schweden," recounting a journey in that country. For further details see Spettigue, *European Years*, 154 - 59.

IV. The New Beginning

At some point between his departure from Germany in September 1909 and his arrival in Winnipeg in December 1912, Felix Paul Greve created a new identity under the name Frederick Philip Grove. Free of external links to his old existence, he had the opportunity to begin a new life. In the character of Frederick Philip Grove he could attempt to live in a manner that the artistic and societal realities had made impossible for Felix Paul Greve. We have extremely little information about Grove's first years in America, but since, as I pointed out in the previous chapter, Greve's writings suggest that he considered Nietzschean philosophy a significant source of values, it appears likely that this philosophy influenced Grove's creation of his new existence. This assumption is substantiated by the manner in which Grove treated the topic of the individual's attempt to create a new existence for himself in North America. In three books which belong to different literary genres, he discussed the question how the individual might best interact with an environment where he is an outsider but is determined to establish himself. *A Search for America* presents itself as fictionalized autobiography, *Over Prairie Trails* consists of nature essays with some fictional elements, and *Settlers of the Marsh* is a novel. Different as the books are from the point of view of literary genre, they share a central concern with the situation of a protagonist who attempts to find the right philosophical approach to his existence.

In our reading of *A Search for America*, *Over Prairie Trails*, and *Settlers of the Marsh* we shall see that the manner in which Grove's protagonists approach their various experiences can best be understood in the light of Nietzschean philosophy. The emphasis that the characters put on self-determination, self-control, and the assertion of their will, as well as the extreme manner in which they attempt to gain power over their lives corresponds closely to Nietzsche's view that the realization of these aspects of the self leads to a satisfying existence. The protagonists approach their search for the best way of life with an idealistic attitude that incorporates Nietzschean values. In the course of their development, they discover the shortcomings of their attitude - most of them resulting from the Nietzschean element - and the necessity to modify their position in order to accommodate the needs which arise from their human natures. Eventually, the protagonists learn to adjust their perceptions of the relative values of their selves and their environment and become able to approach their lives in a realistic manner.

Grove's books are not explorations of philosophical problems. They are concerned with the attitude with which a newcomer to North America is most likely to find happiness. Establishing oneself in a satisfying manner is crucial for everybody coming to the new continent and, by extension, for the new society. Conveying his own conclusions to his neighbors is thus, as Grove has his persona Phil Branden state in *A Search for America*, a contribution to the greater individual and general good:

> I began to see more and more clearly that the very essence of the nation's life was a recognition of that which is fair and just, and a firm resolve to help it along to a final victory. . . . Here was a task, so I thought, for which I was fitted (322 - 23).

The didactic tone of this passage suggests that Grove's audience is supposed to interpret the experiences he recounts to find guidelines which would make their lives meaningful.

In *A Search for America*, Grove presents a protagonist's attempt to find personal satisfaction in the North American environment. To illustrate various possibilities of such a search - which, we may assume, reflects his own experience to a considerable extent - Grove created the persona Phil Branden who is recognizable as a projection of the author, but whose portrait is also vague enough to allow Grove to ascribe insights and experiences to him that differ from the biography he had created for himself and would make official through the publication of *In Search of Myself*. We shall see that Branden's behavior is to a certain extent compatible with Nietzschean ideas. His desire to realize his aspirations completely, without compromising with his neighbors' demands upon him, and his deep suspicion of the influence that other people may have on him can best be understood if we relate them to the corresponding concepts in Nietzsche's view of life. Reading *A Search for America* under consideration of Nietzschean philosophy will also help us to gain further insights into the nature of Branden's search. Branden's experience is vague with regard to verifiable data. This stresses the fact that the conclusions about the relationship of individual and society which the novel promotes are universal and not linked to a particular time or place. At the end of *A Search for America* Branden arrives at a definition of himself and his role in society which incorporates some Nietzschean concepts while rejecting others.

Grove hoped that eventually the prairie might become "the breeding-place of a civilization to come" (*Myself*, 227). Such an implicitly higher civilization might, at least hypothetically, benefit from the Nietzschean approach to existence, and Grove's handling

of ideas suggests that he designed *Over Prairie Trails* to demonstrate the results of an attempt to practice that approach. We shall see that *Over Prairie Trails* portrays the attempt to apply values that we can identify as Nietzschean practically to the specific geographical environment of the Canadian prairie. The narrator's unwillingness to accept the limitations which prairie nature imposes on him and his fierce determination to overcome these restrictions to his self-fulfilment correspond directly to Nietzsche's assertion that the realization of the will to power is the only true path to happiness. Again Grove presented his insights in autobiographical form, but this time his liberties were far more restricted. His account of asserting himself against the forces of the prairie needed a much higher degree of verifiability to be believable. The narrator is different from the author, but the factual autobiographical element is much stronger in him than it had been in Phil Branden.

The self-assertion of the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* is thus far more direct than Phil Branden's, but it is also subject to severe limitations of the range of possible experiences. If Grove wanted his readers to associate the protagonist with the author, he could only ascribe to his central character experiences and achievements that are congruent with the public figure known as Frederick Philip Grove. Thus Grove eventually had to work with a totally fictitious character, Niels Lindstedt, who can experience the consequences of a radically egotistic approach to situations that could not have occurred for a persona closely related to the publicly known Frederick Philip Grove.

In the preface to the fourth edition of *A Search for America*, Grove discarded the notion that the novel was a straightforward rendering of actual facts:

> Imaginative literature is not primarily concerned with facts; it is concerned with truth. It sees fact only within the web of life, coloured and made vital by what preceded it, coloured and made significant by what followed. . . . By writing the book, in the long ago past, I was freeing myself of the mental and emotional burden implied in the fact that I had once lived it and had left it behind. But the present pervaded the past in every fibre (xvii - xviii).[1]

[1]It is quite significant that this preface is dated February, 1939, the month that Grove turned 60. *A Search for America* had generally been read as thinly veiled autobiography, and with this preface Grove may have attempted to downplay differences between the novel and *In Search of Myself* which he was about to compose. The statement is certainly influenced by Grove's attempt to develop a

In the light of our present knowledge of Grove's biography, this preface enables us to read *A Search for America* not as factual but as spiritual autobiography. Grove claimed in *In Search of Myself* that "in 1893 . . . I settled down to write the story of what I had lived through since August, 1892. The result was a manuscript . . . which I called *A Search for America*" (181). Biographical research has proven Grove's claim about the date of composition false, and the book itself contains numerous hints that it was written much later (c.f. Keith, "America," 59), but it is important that Grove wanted *A Search for America* considered the first book he wrote in North America. It is possible to consider this claim an attempt to stress the realism and truthfulness of the novel which is supposedly based on the author's immediate personal experience, but it appears that Grove had more complex motivations for this claim. The novel is the artistic reworking of Grove's experiences and conclusions as an immigrant. The facts of Grove's first years in North America may have been quite different from Phil Branden's, but what matters is that both undergo the same archetypal experiences of immersion in and complete withdrawal from human society and that both arrive at the same conclusions, most importantly, the conviction that interaction with other people is a necessary element of a satisfying human life.[2]

A Search for America clarifies the values which form the basis of Grove's Canadian works. Concerned with the period preceding his settling down in Manitoba, the book records Grove's attempts to come to terms with the values he left behind him in Europe and with those he found in North America. From the vantage point of hindsight, Grove can arrange Branden's experiences in such a manner that they correspond to his own development and is able to include the insights into his position in life that he had not had while experiencing them himself. Branden's story is, as the subtitle of the book declares, "the odyssey of an immigrant," but it is a spiritual odyssey. The physical wanderings are only tangential to the wanderer's mental development in the new

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[1](cont'd) coherent and believable biography that would support the public image he had created for himself.

[2]Recent research suggests that *A Search for America* contains more factual truth than had been assumed so far. C.f. Hjartarson, "Of Greve, Grove." Grove used the same narrative approach in the "Postscript to *A Search for America*" of 1942, in which it matters little whether Grove, who totally abandons the Phil Branden persona in this piece, actually met an Oxford graduate working in the canning factory. What is important is that the scene enables Grove to reflect upon the material fruits of his artistic pursuits and to arrive at his particular notion of failure.

continent. Only after the protagonist had come to terms with his real self could he judge what he saw around him according to standards that are genuinely his own and not taken over uncritically from others.

The extent to which *A Search for America* is Grove's reflection of his search for these new values becomes evident from a passage where I see Branden voicing Grove's thoughts:

> I looked upon the world, upon other people, and upon myself, 'de profundis' - from the depths. It took me years of a new and strange life to get back to a proper appreciation of these memories, and though they do no longer predominate, they form a large and important part of what I call my present intellectual environment (72).

The term "de profundis" refers to Oscar Wilde's reassessment of his values as a consequence of his prison term. As pointed out in the previous chapter, Greve's reading of *De Profundis* increased his concern with Nietzschean concepts, a development which eventually led him to develop Friedrich Karl Reelen as a hypothetical projection of himself. Twenty years after *Fanny Essler*, Grove reviewed how the attitude that he had brought with him to North America had influenced his life on the new continent. In his account he shaped his memories so that Phil Branden eventually develops a sound philosophical approach to life. The fact that Branden shows few similarities to Reelen reveals a significant change in Grove's position toward those values that Nietzsche advocated and Reelen embraced. This change, which remains hidden from the readers who do not know of Grove's German past, is the most significant aspect of *A Search for America*.

When Greve assumed the name Frederick Philip Grove, he developed a persona whose factual biography had little in common with that of the man who had created it. Grove's thinking, however, remained the product of the Central Europe of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Greve had speculated about the consequences of a German's emigration to North America already in his *Randarabesken zu Oscar Wilde* six years before his own emigration, and he had come to conclusions that foreshadow the later development of his thought.

> This man emigrates - of course, he does it only after a 'corruption' - to North America. . . . He grows new instincts. . . . [Life] demands constant attention

> from him; restlessness becomes instinct. *Thus he gradually becomes a new person.* In our example the influence of the foreign country may be added, that means, the difference between the two ways of life is as great as can be imagined. . . . His race changes.[3]

Greve saw human beings as very strongly and unavoidably determined by the culture in which they live. Enviironmental pressure thus appears stronger to Greve than a person's individual heritage. Consequently, emigration appears as a means to free oneself from negative influences upon one's personality. Later on in his career, Grove realized that the immigrant does not enter the new world *tabula rasa*, but that, particularly in the beginning, his emotional and intellectual response to the new environment is still very much conditioned by the ways of thinking he had developed in his previous environment.

The recently immigrated Frederick Philip Grove apparently believed it possible to put into practice what he had discussed in theory as Felix Paul Greve. Having covered up quite successfully the factual traces of his past, he hoped that with the help of environmental forces he would be able to overcome also his "corrupted" mental heritage. North America thus seems to offer to the immigrant the chance of beginning a new life, a life free from the corruption generated by the social and intellectual environment of the old world. This is, however, as Greve had noted, a gradual process which is influenced by a very important factor that undermines Greve's original optimism:

> But science shows us that in [his] children the old race, the old instincts of the father live on hidden in the germs, only covered up, suppressed – however stable this new race may appear.[4]

The new beginning is thus only partially realizable. The new immigrant may eventually adopt a new set of values, but these are added to those that already exist in him as elements of his heritage. The continued inner life of his instincts means that the change

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[3]"Dieser Mensch wandert aus – er tut es natuerlich nur nach einer vorangegangenen 'Korruption' – nach Nordamerika. . . . Ihm wachsen neue Instinkte. . . . [Das Leben] fordert bestaendige Wachheit von ihm, die Unrast wird Instinkt. *So wird er allmaehlich ein neuer Mensch.* In unserem Beispiel komme der Einfluss des fremden Landes hinzu, das heisst: die Verschiedenheit der beiden Lebensbedingungen sei so gross, wie man sie sich nur denken kann. . . . Seine Rasse wandelt sich" (26 – 27; emphasis added). (My translation).

[4]"Aber die Wissenschaft zeigt uns, dass in [seinen] Kindern die alte Rasse, die alten Instinkte des Vaters im Kern verborgen weiterleben, nur verdeckt, unterdrueckt – mag auch die neue Rasse noch so stabil erscheinen" (27). (My translation).

is not radical, that no basically new existence has been created or can be created. The life in the new environment is essentially only a new variety of the old life.

In the longer view, only some of the essentials change, but from the limited point of view of the individual a complete change appears feasible. Consequently a person is easily deluded into believing himself a free agent and basing his endeavors upon this belief only to experience that his perception of reality had been false.

As an indispensable first step the immigrant has to rid himself as much as possible of the prejudices, opinions, and habits of thought that he had formed in his original country. In 1903, Greve had been concerned only with a hypothetical situation. Comparing his own fate to Oscar Wilde's, he sought for a better way out than the one his idol had taken. Yet I do not agree with Walter Pache's claim that "Greve's disappearance in Canada is an extreme experiment of subjecting reality to an artistic concept."[5] Grove was not placing art over reality. *A Search for America* suggests that he had learned from his earlier mistakes and was now trying to find a basis for his life which was free of his earlier fateful confusion of reality and art. The basis for his new existence was his rejection of his aestheticist outlook on life and its replacement by a view of existence tested in factual reality.

A Search for America is Grove's fictional account of this process. At the outset of the novel, Phil Branden is the equivalent of the Felix Paul Greve who attempted to join the Georgeans. Grove's description of Branden at the time of his immigration is a good example of how "the present pervaded the past" in the composition. In retrospect Grove can characterize his protagonist as "a hot-house plant, used to artificial atmospheres" (17), but at the time of his arrival in North America, Branden does not think of himself as that, nor does he regard himself as "an insufferable snob and coxcomb" (3). Rather, the Phil Branden who has just landed in North America considers himself the apex of human achievement, believing that it finds expression in his ridiculously large wardrobe. The value of these clothes is, however, very different from what Branden initially believes it to be. The clothes themselves impede him and are useful only when he can sell them for badly needed money.

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[5]"[Greves] Untertauchen in Kanada ist ein ins Extrem getriebenes Experiment, die Realitaet einem kuenstlerischen Konzept unterzuordnen" ("Fall Grove," 134). (My translation)

Branden's state of mind at the beginning of his odyssey is that of an aestheticist closely resembling the Felix Paul Greve who had become disenchanted with the values of the Georgeans. In retrospect, Branden is able to see that his European idols "had feet of clay" (4). Whatever they possessed had been given to them as a gift, not as reward for merit: "Those who apparently had been the most independent, had been so because they had inherited money. In other words, they had been parasites" (28). Branden seeks for a different lifestyle which embodies values the absolute opposite of those of the "parasites" who, like the literature they produce and cherish, are "filled with contempt for the practical man, and deeply ensconced in artificial poses" (4). This attitude is, of course, the essence of decadent aestheticism. In its stead Branden develops a concept of an ideal lifestyle: "What I desired as an atmosphere was what I considered the necessities for a life devoted to quiet studies, to the search for contact with Nature, to service, unpretentious and unselfish service of mankind" (11). The "quiet studies" and particularly the "contact with Nature" suggest the distance from the established society which, as Greve had implied, is necessary for Branden's success in creating a new personality for himself. Branden expects to find truly positive goals only in an environment in which he would interact with nature rather than man. Branden associates this interaction with America, the new continent not yet corrupted by the old traditions of Europe which had generated the detrimental environment of his youth. North America thus seems to provide the ideal circumstances for his personal development.

> Here I was in a different world. Here I stood entirely on my own feet. Whatever I might have to go through, if finally I arrived somewhere, no matter how little, it would be my own achievement; I must be I (30).

North America thus appears to provide an ideal environment for a character who believes in the Nietzschean concepts that the realization of the personal will is the true key to happiness and that it is within the individual's capacity to bring this self-realization about as an act of will. Consequently, he "made up [his] mind to leave Europe and all [his] old associations behind" (10), expecting the simple geographical transplantation to liberate him from his past. The fact that he keeps his wardrobe indicates that Branden's conclusion is false; his transplantation is still only physical, not mental. The emphasis he puts on his wardrobe shows that Branden is still very strongly attached to the cultural values of Europe, where his clothes had expressed his social status. At this stage in the book, he has not yet realized that his new geographic environment provides him with the

opportunity to develop new values for himself, but that it does not provide him with these values.[6] Associating the ideal of his new life with a geographical location in America, Branden embarks on an almost picaresque quest for his vision, but before he can find it, he has to learn what to look for and how to look. The greater part of the novel is therefore concerned with Phil Branden's education in values.

In the course of the novel Branden goes through a series of occupations each of which represents a possible way of life. Taking his idea of providing "service of mankind" literally, he begins as a waiter in a restaurant. He is materially successful, but his environment is antagonistic to Branden's understanding of his role. The restaurant, which becomes paradigmatic for society, is a world of facades and masks like the artistic one from which Phil had escaped. In that society, success is measured only in the materialistic terms whose validity Branden has learned to reject. Rejecting this environment which prevents him from being himself is the logical consequence:

> I realized that I was nothing finished; that there were still possibilities of growth in me. But, unless I found the soil in which I could grow, I was bound to perish – *no matter what my outward success might be*. . . . What good could it do me if I won all the riches on earth but lost my – growth? (103)

Grove thus gives Branden a very high degree of self-awareness that enables him to add a significant dimension to the theme of the new beginning. Branden's emphasis on spiritual satisfaction regardless of his material situation sets him apart from the material-minded immigrants Grove portrays most emphatically in *Settlers of the Marsh* and *Fruits of the Earth*. Grove can thus have Branden come to conclusions beyond the insight of immigrants such as Lars Nelson.

Branden's second attempt to grow in North America, his career as a book-agent, follows essentially the same pattern as the first. Grove has Phil's co-worker, Miss Henders, summarize the formula for survival in this business society: "I can't sell books; but I can always sell myself" (165). Branden's intention, however, had been to define and realize his self. Attempting to fit himself into American life would thus force him to deny what he considers his most precious possession, the potential inherent in his self. America is thus no longer the haven that he had expected only a year before: "What was America then? Graft and cruelty, nothing else" (160). The ambition to become himself

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[6]The frequent references to Carlyle's *Sator Resartus* indicate clearly that Grove wanted his readers to understand Branden's wardrobe as more than just clothes.

appears to be as difficult to realize in America as it had been in Europe. But then Grove brings to the forefront a thought Branden expressed before the bookselling experience:

> The trouble is that in our cities we stand in the turmoil of the day; nearly all that finds utterance through the voice belongs to this turmoil. In order to catch the real trend of American thought you have to get your ear down to the soil to listen. Then you will hear the sanity, the good sense, and the good-will which are truly American (101).

The city, and the society which it houses, are thus destructive influences upon the individual. Consequently, Grove has Branden leave the city for the small town and then the small town for the open country. But even when he works in the rural region, he is tied to society through his work.

Branden's only chance of becoming himself rests in his total rejection of all ties to a society which exerts its negative influence upon him. Understanding that he can realize his maxim, "I must be I," only if he is his own master, Branden undertakes an experimental withdrawal from all human society. In the novel, Branden's retreat into solitude is associated with Henry David Thoreau who, like Abraham Lincoln, is presented as an ideal American. Branden's withdrawal resembles Thoreau's stay at Walden Pond, but the extreme degree to which Branden embraces solitude exceeds Thoreau's moderation and indicates the significance of the Nietzschean concept that the true self can only develop in absolute solitude.

In describing Branden's motivation, Grove suggests that Branden's experiment is not an idiosyncratic fancy but rather a serious reaction against the existing society:

> It was the movement away from the accidentals in life and towards the essentials. It was a desire for a simplification of issues. . . . What is commonly called civilization is indeed a movement from the essentials to the accidentals. . . . I dimly felt a desire to do something, to get away from things, to simplify them, to remodel myself and my life (218 - 19).

Branden associates this ideology with John Burroughs and Thomas Carlyle, but the man who expressed ideas most similar to these was another of Grove's idols, Henry David Thoreau, who explained his motivation for his sojourn at Walden Pond in almost identical terms.

> I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach. . . . I

> wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner and reduce it to its lowest terms (61).

The most obvious parallel between Thoreau and Branden is that both hope to find freedom and self-improvement by living outside of society and its pressures. They share a distaste for society, yet the basic motivation for their withdrawal is not escape but the ambition to reach an ideal that exists on a higher level than society. This society appears as too much of an impediment to overcome for those who want to reach that higher level of existence.

There are, however, significant differences between Thoreau's and Branden's withdrawals which suggest that Thoreau's ideology alone does not suffice to explain the episode of Branden's solitude. Thoreau had gone to Walden Pond primarily to concentrate on life's essentials without being forced to spend time and energy on the material aspirations held so dear by his neighbors. But he still lived in close proximity to Concord and had frequent though not regular interaction with other people. Branden, however, attempts to escape from mankind altogether. Material aspirations are only one of the negative qualities that Branden sees in his fellow human beings. He also rejects North America's demand for conformity and its pervasive dishonesty. His experience in America seems to prove to him that social interaction enables others to take away his ability to determine his own direction and thus to prevent him from realizing his true self.

The Thoreauvian and Nietzschean influences are parallel up to a point, but eventually Thoreau, who had rejected primarily mankind's narrow materialism, reaches the limits of his withdrawal and returns to mankind, whereas Nietzsche pursues his rejection of humanity to the extreme. Branden's motivations clearly go further than Thoreau's - he rejects "the settled portion of mankind for whom [he] still had nothing but aversion" (239). He thus echoes the sentiment that Nietzsche expressed through Zarathustra's mouth:

> Where solitude ceases, there the market-place begins; and where the market-place begins, there begins the uproar of the great actors and the buzzing of the poisonous flies. . . . All great things occur away from glory and the market-place: the inventors of new values have always lived away from glory and the market-place. Flee, my friend, into your solitude: I see you stung

by poisonous flies. Flee to where the raw, rough breeze blows!' (*Zarathustra*, 78 - 79).[7]

During his time of solitude, Branden is able to achieve a mental balance that he had not experienced while living in society and thus seems to prove the truth of the Nietzschean demand for solitude as a prerequisite for a higher existence: "Solitary man, you are going the way of the creator. . . . Go apart and be alone with your love and your creating" (*Zarathustra*, 90).[8] Regardless of the physical difficulties he experiences, Branden is able to rejoice, "The world seemed to belong to me" (243). Valuing his own actions creates a state of elation he had not felt before. This basic stage of self-determination is so valuable for Branden that he "want[s] to drink to the dregs the last cup of freedom vouchsafed" (250).

Grove's view of solitude is, however, not totally positive. Branden's experience with the hermit suggests Grove's doubts about the value of complete solitude that Nietzsche had praised. Branden declares himself unable to judge the hermit, but the references to his "dead" and "vacant" eyes (253) indicate that the hermit's experience with solitude ended in failure. Nietzsche had warned that solitude is not easy to bear: "There are emotions that seek to kill the solitary; if they do not succeed, well, they must die themselves! But are you capable of being a murderer?" (*Zarathustra*, 89).[9] Branden's experience with the hermit shows that Grove saw far greater dangers in absolute solitude than Nietzsche had allowed for, dangers not only emotional but mental and physical as well. At least to an outsider, the hermit's mental development appears regressive rather than progressive, and the simple fact that Branden has to save the man from drowning shows how incapable man is of living in isolation. While solitude may bring positive results if enjoyed in Thoreauvian moderation, excess of the kind advocated by Zarathustra appears impracticable and dangerous to Branden. He does not find peace of

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[7] "Wo die Einsamkeit aufhoert, da beginnt der Markt; und wo der Markt beginnt, da beginnt auch der Laerm der grossen Schauspieler und das Geschwirr der giftigen Fliegen. . . . Abseits vom Markte und Ruhme begiebt sich alles Grosse: abseits vom Markte und Ruhme wohnten von je die Erfinder neuer Werthe. Fliehe, mein Freund, in deine Einsamkeit: ich sehe dich von giftigen Fliegen zerstochen. Fliehe dorthin, wo rauhe starke Luft weht!" (13: 62 - 63).

[8] "Einsamer, du gehst den Weg des Schaffenden. . . . Mit deiner Liebe gehe in deine Vereinsamung und mit deinem Schaffen" (13: 79 - 80).

[9] "Es giebt Gefuehle, die den Einsamen toedten wollen; gelingt es ihnen nicht, nun, so muessen sie selber sterben! Aber vermagst du das, Moerder zu sein?" (13: 78).

mind and happiness in solitude, but rather a serious threat to mental stability. Having seen these dangers, Branden is prepared to attempt to arrange his life in human society: "I greeted that light like a message from the sane, quiet, well-ordered world of men. Up here on the heights perched insanity" (233).[10]

After a series of experiments in values and modes of life ranging from total submission to the will of others to total rejection of human company, Branden is eventually forced to find an acceptable compromise between his desire for mental independence and the necessity to satisfy his physical needs, which makes the presence of other people in his life inevitable. He accepts that he has to do something in return for his physical survival – "I was not a parasite" (275) – but he insists on doing it in a manner befitting his self. Branden's decision to spend his life as a migratory worker is congruent with his perception. As a farmhand he can contribute whatever he feels he should, yet he can sever his connections and go his own way whenever it seems appropriate.

Phil Branden arrives at a perception of the relative importance of self and society as sources of values that is very similar to Thoreau's. How close to the models of Thoreau and Nietzsche Grove's own perception of social authority was becomes evident from the following passage in his essay "Rebels All": "My resentment arose from my bondage to the system of valuation imposed by others. So, being essentially a free-man, I struck out and annihilated that system by a revaluation" (77). Grove bases his revaluation solely on his own perceptions, thus stating that he accepts nobody else's as guideline. He creates his own values and implies that doing so is a necessary step on the path to self-fulfilment. Thoreau's ultimate objective is to create a state of mind which frees him from external influence and will ready him for the influence of the divine oversoul.

This emphasis on the oversoul distinguishes Thoreau from both Nietzsche and Grove. Whatever the oversoul may be, it belongs to the realm of metaphysics. The

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[10]In his description of the mountains as reaching "into a region of indistinct, grey visibility which seemed pregnant with danger, threatened with the invasion of incomprehensible, cosmic things sweeping along over the universe" (233) Grove reverses the evaluation of the mountains he had given in the "Irrfahrt" poem of *Wanderungen*. Thus we find him again refuting a formerly held view of which the Canadian readers were unaware. This instance demonstrates again the large extent to which *A Search for America* is a revaluation of Grove's personal convictions.

theological implications of the concept of the oversoul remain debatable, but they are of no consequence for this thesis. Since Thoreau perceives self-fulfilment as necessarily linked to a supernatural power, his position is essentially irreconcilable with Nietzsche, who denies the existence of a divine sphere altogether and seeks divine perfection only in human beings. The supernatural element is completely missing in Grove's work. Phil Branden seeks for a complete self, not for any divine revelation. Thus we can conclude that Grove used the more accessible Thoreau wherever his views coincided with Nietzsche's, but the basis of Grove's position was ultimately closer to that of the German philosopher. Nietzsche advocates the same independence of mind as Thoreau, but for different reasons. In his understanding, only someone whose will to power is stronger than all other forces and wills assaulting him or her will be able to give full expression to his or her will to power and thus gain dominance over his or her own existence.

The vision that determines Branden's perception of the last stage of his wanderings is the concept of anarchy which allows Grove to combine his reading of Nietzsche with his admiration of Thoreauvian ideals. Thoreau's best summary of his personal version of anarchism can be found in the conclusion to *Walden*:

> If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. . . . Let every one mind his own business, and endeavor to be what he was made (214 - 15).

This affirmation of the realized self as the only valid authority for a person makes impossible the acceptance of any external authority - such as society - and constitutes the ideological foundation of an anarchic mode of life.

Branden first uses the label of anarchist for himself when he embarks on his experiment in solitude: "I have left the society of man. I am an outcast - something closely resembling those dreaded beings which I have thought of with a shudder: anarchists. I am alone; I stand against the world" (229). At this stage, Branden associates anarchy only with the absence of restrictions, not with the opportunities this freedom opens up to him. He becomes aware of its positive potential only after he has

learned that anarchism is a state of mind, not a state of physical existence. He realizes only slowly that anarchism does not mean rejecting external forces but rather acting according to values of which one is convinced, regardless of other people's approval. The doctor who cures Branden's pneumonia is as good an anarchist as the hermit, but his anarchism is much more beneficial to his fellow human beings and thus preferable to the hermit's refusal to have any dealings with the world outside of himself (289 - 90).

Having understood what the concept of anarchy really embodies, Branden is able to see that he can be mentally independent and yet contribute his share to the well-being of humanity. Grove even provides what at first seems like a ready-made solution for Branden's quest for an acceptable way of life:

> The hobo is, at least in his own estimation - and what else counts? - the lord of the world; deliberately he follows his inclination; if constituted society is at variance with him, so much the worse for constituted society for it is the slave of convention and greed! (321).

Branden believes that being involved in agriculture, being "among the fundamentals of life," will make it possible for him to be "master supreme of [him]self and [his] fate" (311). But a serious rethinking of the hobo's life reveals its shortcomings to Branden. It is a shiftless, essentially unproductive life, geared only toward the moment. In its way, it is an extreme life, as extreme as that of the hermit; and like the hermit's, it is very selfish. Branden realizes that the ideal life is not total selfishness and independence, but rather a kind of autonomous altruism:

> There was in my heart, deep down, a craving for peace with society, a desire to take root somewhere and to fit myself into the scheme of life in the western hemisphere as a cog which furthered its design in some definite way. . . . I began to see more and more clearly that the very essence of the nation's life was a recognition of that which is fair and just, and a firm resolve to help it along to a final victory (322).

Branden thus arrives at a conclusion that differs greatly from the Nietzschean extremes he had experienced. He still stresses self-realization and mental independence very strongly, but now he accepts service to others as an integral part of his self. Branden's demand for self-realization is in accord with Nietzschean ideals, but in making Branden see other people not only as opponents in his quest for personal power but also as factors in his self-realization, Grove balances Nietzsche's advice for satisfaction of the self

against the emotional needs that the philosopher disregarded. After experiencing extremes which parallel those that Nietzsche promoted as the means to achieve self-fulfilment and finding them seriously deficient, Branden returns to a more moderate position reconcilable with Thoreau's. The structure of the novel suggests that without having experienced the dangers of complete solitude, Branden might not have become able to tolerate the shortcomings of the human society in which he decides to find his place.

Branden is not condemned to remain in the socially meaningless world of hobodom. Through his wanderings Branden has acquired a special qualification for contributing to the improvement of America: "The immigrant always sees only a partial view; but I had seen enough partial views to make their average more or less true to reality" (391). Teaching the fruits of his experience to new immigrants, he can assist them in making America a land that provides the opportunity for self-realization for everybody. The material dependence that he will experience as a teacher is only one of life's accidentals. The true essentials of life, its spiritual values, make him independent. Thus he can realize his vision of determining his own fate as far as seems possible.

A passage toward the end of the novel makes clear the large extent to which *A Search for America* is a spiritual, not a geographical search:

> I thought I saw through the futility of much, and that I perceived the high worth of much which was not highly valued by others. The phrase of a German philosopher about the 'recasting – revaluation – of values' was much in my mind. I seemed to be looking upon millennia of thought and accumulated wisdom. I vaguely felt as if it were given to me to solve the problems of a world. It is characteristic of my essential youth at the time that I still believed a solution of the problems of the world to be possible of attainment through such a process as a recasting of values – in other words, through theories and the erection of ideals. It is also characteristic of the eternal egotism of youth that I should have felt myself to be chosen as the one to effect this revaluation of the values of life. Ideals are the playthings of immature minds (342).

The philosopher referred to in this passage is clearly identifiable as Friedrich Nietzsche.[11] Branden had come to America with ideas untested in real life. Yet he had

[11]The revaluation of all existing values is an essential task for everybody who accepts Nietzsche's view of the world which is based on the non-existence of

believed in them because he was still under the influence of an external will, his education, and had therefore not yet found his true self. Having cast off the limitations imposed on him by his background, he accepts only theories whose validity he has proven for himself. Grove's rejection of Nietzschean values in this context is highly significant, since it will penetrate his whole oeuvre. Branden essentially rejects these values because they do not survive the test of reality. But interestingly enough, the manner in which Branden arrives at this conclusion is fundamentally Nietzschean. Branden attains a level of awareness that permits him to revaluate all values from his personal point of view. He acts as a Nietzschean without knowing it. In his search, he has learned to put his own values, which he has confirmed through a Nietzschean revaluation, very consciously over everybody else's. Thus he has created a basic prerequisite for true self-knowledge and self-realization. But he has also come to reject some of Nietzsche's values. Now he no longer believes in the values of total isolation that Felix Paul Greve had praised in "Irrfahrt." His search for America has taught him that he is human and has to live accordingly. Like Ivan, he has become "the man who stands squarely upon the soil and who, from the soil, from his soil, reaches out with tentative mind into the great mysteries" (348 - 49).

Through the character of Phil Branden, Grove still advocates independence of mind as an essential factor contributing to a person's satisfaction with his or her life, but at the same time, he stresses that such material independence must necessarily be complemented by philosophically well-founded interaction with other human beings. Branden learns from his experiences that as a human being he has to satisfy not only his intellectual, but also his emotional needs.

Phil Branden's search for America is a spiritual, not a geographical search. Therefore the geographical details are vague and essentially meaningless. The basic theme of *A Search for America* is Branden's revaluation of values imposed on him by

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[11](cont'd) God. All values founded upon divine prescriptions are logically invalid *per se* since their basis has been proven false. They can remain valid only if the individual who examines them decides to accept them out of his or her own personal conviction. Essentially, the revaluation of all values thus amounts to "mankind's greatest step towards coming to its senses" (*Ecce Homo*, 131 - 32) ("ein Akt hoechster Selbstbesinnung der Menschheit" [21: 276]). A person who successfully revaluates all values finally practices "the courage to become conscious" (*Will*, 2: 391) ("ein muthiges Bewusstwerden" [19: 338]) of his or her own existence. Having reached this level of awareness, this person can then proceed to attempt a perfection of his or her existence.

society. His is a universal experience that can take place in any environment. His finding of his true self is a consequence of his individual experiences, not of their geographical setting. The factual reality of his surroundings becomes significant to him only after he has found his true self and his own system of values.

A character who has clarified for himself the values according to which he wants to live has to concern himself in a second step with the physical conditions of his new life. *Over Prairie Trails* is Grove's account of a protagonist's attempt to deal with the prairie on his own terms. It would be a mistake to equate the narrator of the book directly with the author, but this persona is less veiled than the "Phil Brander" of *A Search for America* or the "Frederick Philip Grove" of *In Search of Myself*. Grove presents a narrator far more locatable in space and time than Phil Branden had been. Through external details he invites the reader to equate author and narrator and to accept the narrative as factually true, but the narrator nevertheless remains a creation of the author who filters and rearranges Grove's perceptions. We shall see that the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* introduces a Nietzschean point of view which it is necessary to consider for a full understanding of the book.

The contrast between Grove's old and new environments could hardly have been greater. Having grown up in highly civilized and organized Central European cities, he was confronted in North America with the prairie in the initial stages of civilization. Henry Kreisel, himself a transplanted Central European, has aptly summarized the influence that the prairie environment exerts on the human mind:

> Man, the giant-conqueror, and man, the insignificant dwarf always threatened by defeat, form the two polarities of the state of mind produced by the sheer physical fact of the prairie (256).

In this environment man has to define and delimit himself constantly. The magnitude of the threat and of the challenge forces him to know and control his powers very well in order to establish himself. Nietzschean philosophy, with its stress on self-awareness and self-control, thus provides a guideline for the kind of self-fulfilment that depends upon asserting one's will to power against the opposing forces of the land.

Grove's narrator portrays himself as socially isolated from his fellow townsmen whose shortcomings he is unwilling to tolerate, and as geographically isolated from his family. He is most happy while on his rides, under the direct influence of neither pole of

his existence: "I was 'on the go.' I had torn up my roots, as it were, I felt detached and free" (2). This pleasure in isolation is more than a momentary feeling of joy at having escaped the restrictions of the town's society. Gradually the picture emerges that the rides home to his family are primarily an opportunity for the narrator to experience solitude. "If I could make my life by driving instead of teaching, I should feel the stronger, the healthier, and the better for it – my main problem would have been solved" (95). The narrator does not spell out what his main problem is, but he longs for "the simpler, the more elemental things, things cosmic in their associations, nearer to the beginning or end of creation" (51), and contact with others seems to make such experiences impossible. This wish is essentially the same ideal that Phil Branden strives for and labels "anarchism." The narrator sees all human interaction as forcing him to make compromises which undermine his urge to realize his self absolutely. His drives free him from interference from other human beings. "Between those people and myself the curtain had fallen – no sign of their presence, no faintest gleam of their light and warmth" (35).

Yet even when he has cut himself off from all human contact, the narrator is not the complete master of his existence. He still has nature to contend with. To be in complete control of his physical existence, the narrator has to prove that he is stronger also than nature. As Walter Pache notes, "he sees the challenge as a supreme test of his personality" ("Dilettante," 189). If he is able to establish his will against the forces of nature as successfully as against the pressures of society, the narrator can consider his will the strongest influence upon his existence, live more consciously, and give his life the direction he desires for it. Pache criticized the narrator's actions as "the arrogant denial of the human condition" ("Dilettante," 189). A Nietzschean reading of *Over Prairie Trails* will show that the narrator's attitude is praiseworthy from the point of view of complete self-assertion. Thus we will add a new level to our understanding of Grove's text.

The drives themselves offer the narrator the opportunity to discover the workings of nature. Grove presents this nature as a formidable enemy: harsh, powerful, relentless, and totally indifferent to human aspirations. Understanding this nature is essential for the narrator's fight because "I believe in getting ready before I start" (31). The narrator's preparation for encounters with nature allows Grove to write some of his most impressive prose (McCourt, 68), but it is informed by the desire to understand nature rationally, not artistically. As Ricou observed, "the concentration on a small detail, for

example his focussing on the pattern traced by a single snowflake, is an effective way to explain the actions of drifting snow" (44). Having understood and explained those actions to himself, the narrator can react to assert his self-interest. Without such preparation, the human will seems contradictory to nature's design: "It is strange how rarely the work of man will really harmonize with Nature. . . . Man builds, and it jars – very likely because he mostly builds with silly pretensions" (56). Not understanding the workings of nature and thus not sufficiently prepared to assert himself against it, man is frustrated by nature's power: "Nature strips down our pretences with a relentless finger, and we stand, bare of disguises, as helpless failures" (118). The terms that Grove uses to describe the narrator's encounter with one of nature's weapons, snow, show clearly how strongly contest and conflict dominate the narrator's view of nature:

> I remember with particular distinctness the slight dizziness that overcame me, the sinking feeling in my heart, the awe, and the foreboding that I had challenged a force in Nature which might defy all tireless effort and the most fearless heart (72).

This natural force is no passive set of circumstances; it is an "enemy" (78) to man's aspirations and has to be fought. The narrator could acknowledge his initial observation that "the wilderness uses human material up" (11), but he is not willing to accept defeat. Realizing himself is more important than safety: "Like the snow I obeyed the laws of my nature" (72).

In the end, the narrator has to concede defeat because nature, particularly the sky, "broke [his] nerve" (145). He has to experience that in spite of his preparations, nature remains stronger than man. In Nietzschean terms, the narrator's will to power is weaker than the will of the natural forces. It is important that the obstacles which bring about the narrator's failure exist as parts of nature. Nature thus does not willfully spite the narrator; it simply sets its own laws. The narrator is too weak to oppose it, but his experience does not have to be in vain. Others, particularly his daughter, to whom the book is dedicated, can learn from his example:

> Ever since the little girl was born, there had been only one desire which filled my life. Where I had failed, she was to succeed. Where I had squandered my energies and opportunities, she was to use them to some purpose. What I might have done but had not done, she was to do. She was to redeem me. I was her natural teacher. Teaching her became henceforth my life-work (117).

By relating his experiences to his daughter, he can teach her an important lesson and thus prepare her to resist external influences.

The narrator himself is not able to go beyond the limits set by nature, but he has learned an important lesson. Cohn-Sfetcu has aptly summarized the conclusion at which he arrives: "A significant human life is an act not a state of being, for of ultimate importance is the spirit in which the individual responds to the sum total of factors which constitute his environment" (56). Regardless of how well he has prepared himself for his task, the narrator is not capable of realizing his will to power altogether by overcoming the limits that nature imposes upon him. Consequently, he has to learn how to realize as many of his aspirations as possible within these limits to his personality.

The fictional characters whom the reader can identify, correctly or not, as personae of Frederick Philip Grove - Phil Branden and the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* - have thus reached their limits. As Walter Pache argues, *Over Prairie Trails* undermines seriously the validity of Nietzsche's vision of the individual's possibilities. "The grand pose of the superman created by his own totality of power, the pose of the superior planner and overcomer, ends completely in twilight."[12] Frederick Philip Grove himself was not so advanced on the Nietzschean scale of self-realization that a character openly based upon his personality could ever realize the Nietzschean ideal. A less limited character might use the unspoiled, "pre-Adamic" (*Trails*, 72) prairie environment to start anew, realize himself in an existence that accommodates his personal wishes and interests, and establish a better society on the Canadian prairie.

The ending of *Over Prairie Trails* leaves the question open whether the narrator's failure to assert his will completely is due to a shortcoming of himself or of his approach. Grove's ongoing consideration in his fictions of an approach to existence that is compatible with Nietzschean values indicates that Nietzsche's perceptions of the way to self-fulfilment still influenced his perception of his environment.

In *Settlers of the Marsh*, Grove once again presents a protagonist who attempts to establish himself on the prairie and whose behavior - particularly his insistence upon his will and his attempt to rid himself of his sexual passion - is similar to the kind of

[12] "Die grossangelegte Pose des Uebermenschen aus eigener Machtvollkommenheit, des ueberlegenen Planers und Ueberwinders, geraet vollends in Zwielicht" ("Fall Grove," 126). (My translation).

behavior promoted by Nietzsche. Niels does not think in Nietzschean terms, but, to a large extent, he acts according to them, although not coherently. Reading *Settlers of the Marsh* in the light of Nietzschean philosophy thus helps us to understand Niels' character and fate better.

Niels Lindstedt is not held back by any of those personal factors that had impeded the Grove personae. He is strong, determined, and willing to attempt a new beginning in which be believes strongly:

> In this country there was a way out for him who was young and strong. In Sweden it had seemed to him as if his and everybody's fate had been fixed from all eternity. He could not win out because he had to overcome, not only his own poverty, but that of all his ancestors to boot (39).

Canada is Niels' opportunity to start a new life that is suited to his personal nature.

The opening scene of the novel emphasizes the circumstances in Niels' new environment. Now he does not have to deal with a restrictive social system, but with a nature that makes human interaction almost impossible. "Whenever one of them spoke, the wind snatched his word from his lips and threw it aloft. A merciless force was slowly numbing them by ceaseless pounding" (16 - 17). In this environment the individual has to be constantly on his guard and must be able to make his way independently of other people who might have different interests. The bush in which Niels attempts to build his new existence is far from hospitable. It commands the same array of relentless forces that the narrator had to struggle against during his drives over prairie trails. "The land counters the atmosphere of freedom with a strong sense of both the immense inevitability of timeless natural forces and the tremendous impersonal ruthlessness of the forces which would move against him" (Thompson, "Search of Order," 25). Niels seems perfectly equipped for this harsh wilderness: "He felt as if freedom had been bestowed upon him in the wild. Somehow he felt less a stranger in the bush" (27).

Grove states explicitly that Niels is motivated for his new start not by a desire for economic independence but rather by an innate longing to establish himself on his own terms. "By some trick in his ancestry there was implanted in him the longing for the land that would be his: with a house of his own and a wife that would go through it like an inspiration" (39). In Sweden Niels had developed a vague mental image of his self-realization. Thus a very important difference between him and Phil Branden becomes obvious. Branden developed his desire for self-realization after discovering that his way

of life was false. Niels' longing to fulfill himself, however, is a genuine character trait which may have been strengthened by the unsatisfactory living conditions in the old society but which had not been caused by them.

The greatest difference between the schoolteacher of *Over Prairie Trails* and Niels Lindstedt is that Niels has a concrete idea about the way in which he wants to realize himself. The original "Pioneers"[13] had begun with a chapter deleted from *Settlers of the Marsh*. This section, posthumously published under the title "The First Day of an Immigrant," deals with the threshing gang mentioned in the second paragraph of the novel, and ends with a vision:

> He turns his mind away from his critical thoughts and back to his dreams. He sees himself established on a small farm of his own, with a woman in the house; and he sees the two of them sitting by lamp-light in a neat living room of that house while from upstairs there sounds down to them the pitter-patter of little children's feet – his own little children's, romping before they crawl into their snug little beds. That is his vision: the vision that has brought him into these broad plains. And that vision is destined to shape his whole life in the future (*Tales*, 215).

This vision, repeated in *Settlers of the Marsh* (36), and Grove's comment contain important hints for the understanding of Niels' personality. Niels considers this pastoral scene realizable. He can do so because as vision it exists independently of factual reality. Niels had developed this vision of self-realization in total ignorance of the factual circumstances of his existence on the prairie, yet his will to power makes him try to realize this vision and reject all other modes of life. Grove's portrait of the relationship between Niels and Ellen contains his critique of an approach to life that results in such a strong discrepancy between will and reality.

Niels' neighbor Amundsen soon becomes the model for success: "Whatever Amundsen did, he did right" (19). Most importantly, Amundsen seems to be the master

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[13]*Settlers of the Marsh* is a condensed version of the two-volume typescript "Latter Day Pioneers," held in the Frederick Philip Grove Collection, Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. A third volume of "Pioneers" was planned, but it does not seem to have been written. The two completed volumes of "Pioneers" present the story of Niels Lindstedt until he kills his wife. The parts deleted in the published version are mostly concerned with giving the backgrounds of other characters in the novel such as Sigurdsen, Hahn, and Dahlbeck. See also Makow, "Garbled Extract."

of his whole existence, accepting no power over him, not even God. "He spoke with a firm and insistent voice a prayer which sounded as if he were rather laying down the law to his creator than invoking his blessing" (21).

Niels is certain of his material success because the ideal seems to correspond directly to a hospitable reality:

> Of his material success he had no doubt. . . . It was merely a question of persevering and hewing straight to the line. Life was simplified. Yet, material success was not enough. What did it matter whether a person had a little more or less wealth? . . . But the accessories of life were really the essentials; they were what made living worth while: the building up of a whole little world that revolved about him (45).

Niels' later experiences show that this passage contains the fundamental flaw of his approach to his building up of a new existence. Elevating the accessories of life – building his farm, realizing his very specific vision of family life – to essentials, Niels subsequently acts as if he were truly pursuing the essential aspects of life and as if he were capable of realizing them. He makes the tragic mistake of ignoring the basic difference between material success and emotional satisfaction. He believes, in fact, that he will be able to gain emotional fulfilment with the same means that bring him material success. In the course of the novel, Niels has to suffer drastically because of this basic fault in his perception. He can realize the material aspects of the vision he has of family life with Ellen, but he does not understand that the complete realization of his vision depends upon Ellen's emotions. They are, however, beyond the influence of his will, and Niels is unable to find an appropriate way of dealing with this situation.

The ideal that Niels strives for, "the building up of a whole little world that revolved about him" (45), is at its core Nietzschean. Being the master of his own world is the equivalent of being the master of his own existence. Perceiving his existence only in material terms, Niels is not yet capable of achieving mastery also over his passions. Niels' misperception of the factors which constitute his existence is not dangerous yet, but Grove has already established the discrepancy between the reality of Niels' existence and his perception of it. Up to this point, *Settlers of the Marsh* has been concerned only with the premises of Niels' attempt to create a new existence for himself. The rest of the novel focusses on the practical consequences of Niels' attempt to carry out his plans and shows very drastically the dangers of Niels' delusion about the factors that shape his life.

Concentrating on the Nietzschean elements of *Settlers of the Marsh* enables us to come to significant insights into Niels' development that we would have overlooked from a different perspective. Niels' character is difficult to assess, because his behavior and motivations exhibit Nietzschean as well as humanistic tendencies. These elements are basically irreconcilable, since they give completely different values to the striving for fulfilment and the failure that Niels experiences. A large part of Niels' tragedy results from the fact that he attempts to find fulfilment in humanistic and in Nietzschean terms. Since it is impossible to combine these two value systems, Niels invariably fails in either one of them. One of the Nietzschean traits of his character is that he believes he can achieve anything if he tries hard enough. Consequently, his usual response to failure is not to rethink his ambition, but rather to pursue his original plan even more rigorously. Through his radical approach, he only increases the extent of his failure and develops two different kinds of guilt. The human side of his being pronounces him guilty of having attempted to assert his will in a manner that violates humanistic values; the Nietzschean side, of having failed to assert his will completely enough. As a consequence of this confusion, Niels becomes more and more deeply entangled in the philosophical paradox that underlies his behavior.

The problematic basis of Niels' behavior necessarily creates very different interpretations of his fate. For most readers, who approach his story from a humanistic point of view, Niels fails as a human being because he does not acknowledge his passions and give them the proper place in his life. By ignoring them, he allows them to develop uncontrolled and, eventually, to exert such a large influence upon him. From this point of view, Niels would profit from accepting his passions as parts of his personality and treating them accordingly. Such behavior is, however, unacceptable from a Nietzschean point of view which posits self-realization as the only way to true happiness and the overcoming of the passions as an essential prerequisite for self-realization. Rather than hope for Niels' fulfilment of his humanity, a Nietzschean view considers the overcoming of this humanity desirable. Only if we are constantly aware that this moral confusion informs Niels' thoughts and actions can we hope to do justice to his character.

Niels can realize his vision only if he has a world for himself which he creates and dominates and into which no wishes or aspirations of another person enter. But he is unable to see this. He believes that he has combined his vision of the future with that of Ellen Amundsen: "He could no longer imagine a future life without Ellen" (46);

"everything he did he did for her" (49). When he becomes aware that his interest for Ellen is also sexual (49), Niels attempts to sublimate his physical passion which he considers base.[14]

In the description of Niels' activity as a farmer before his proposal to Ellen, Grove gives an example of the potential inherent in Niels that enables him to achieve huge and worthwhile goals once his – implicitly lower – physical passion for Ellen no longer interferes with his plans – as Nietzsche had envisaged. Niels' decision, "I must have thirty acres cleared and broken before I can ask her" (79), means that he has replaced his – in his perception ambiguous – passion for Ellen by an unequivocally positive passion for the cultivation of the land as a precondition for the realization of his passion for Ellen.

Although Niels appears to be successful in overcoming his sexual passion for Ellen, it becomes evident that he has only delayed the moment when he will have to face the reality of this passion. Ellen, or rather Niels' concept of her, remains the ultimate end of the passion upon which everything depends. Rather than becoming an end in itself as the object of his new passion – a development that would have been consistent with the Nietzschean elements of his ambition – Niels' cultivation of the land is an auxiliary end whose value is determined by Ellen's decision.

Eventually this lack of completeness in Niels' handling of his passion will have serious negative consequences, but as long as his control appears complete, its results are unequivocally positive:

> Niels lived in a continual glow of excitement. He worked passionately; he dreamed passionately; and when he lay down at night, he even slept with something like a passionate intensity (48).

He is not only able to fulfill his dream of a big house on a prosperous farm but also works effectively on Ellen's farm. "He pitched as he had never pitched before. The load was up in record time. . . . With every forkful Niels lifted such a load as left only gleanings where the pile had been" (76 – 77). This is obviously the best state of mind for realizing the task of establishing oneself physically as a pioneer. At this stage, everything

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[14]Niels' attempted sublimation of his sexual passion for Ellen will be discussed at greater length in chapter 5. In this chapter I am concerned with Grove's exploration of the individual's attempt to establish himself physically against the forces of the land. The actual process of sublimation and its emotional consequences are insignificant in this respect; only the practical consequences of the sublimation affect the fulfilment of the pioneer's material ambition.

seems to be perfect, so perfect indeed that Niels seems assured of being able to realize his ideal of becoming the absolute master of his physical existence on his own farm.

At this point, *Settlers of the Marsh* appears to show that it is possible to establish oneself as one's own master on the Canadian prairie. Niels' success demonstrates that a person who is capable of concentrating all his energy on establishing himself physically and of sublimating all other passions and impulses into his will to material power can be successful even in the harsh environment of the Canadian prairie.

The basis of Niels' apparent success is, however, a misperception of his place in the world. The material success for which he strives turns out to be only a prerequisite for self-fulfillment, and not even a central one. The manner in which he approaches his existence enables him to realize his will to material success, but the belief that he will gain happiness only by asserting his will creates the opposite of what he wants to achieve. Without his being aware of it, the central part of his life, his spiritual and emotional development, falls sacrifice to the fight for material self-sufficiency.[15] Niels' fate, like that of Abe Spalding in the later *Fruits of the Earth*, is a good illustration of that force which Henry Kreisel has observed as one of the most central elements of writings about the prairie.

> The price paid for the conquest by the conqueror or the would-be conqueror is clearly and memorably established. . . . Many lose and there are everywhere mute emblems testifying to defeat. . . . But into the attempted conquest, whether ultimately succesful or not, men pour an awesome, concentrated passion. The earth is . . . the shaper and controller of his mind, exacting servitude (261).

Niels attempts to conquer this earth, and in purely material terms he is very successful. However, as Clara's account of their marriage demonstrates (153 - 58), Niels sacrifices everything to his material pursuits, even his humanity. In *Unnamed Country*

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[15] Nietzsche stressed that the existence of passions is very important to complete a personality: "The *blind yielding* to a passion, whether it be generosity, pity, or hostility, is the cause of the greatest evil. Greatness of character does not consist in not possessing these passions - on the contrary, a man should possess them to a terrible degree: but he should lead them by the bridle" (*Will*, 2: 346) ("Die *blinde Nachgiebigkeit* gegen einen Affekt, sehr gleichgueltig, ob es ein generoeser und mitleidiger oder feindseliger ist, ist die Ursache der *groessten* Uebel. Die Groesse des Charakters besteht nicht darin, dass man diese Affekte nicht besitzt, - im Gegenteil, man hat sie in furchtbarstem Grade: aber dass man sie am Zuegel fuehrt" [19: 300]).

Harrison observed that

> External nature is a fair opponent, and man could presumably prove himself in the stress of his encounter with it. In Grove's world a strong man can win; what matters is how he wins and what the struggle does to him (115).

Grove had summarized the usual consequence of human encounter with nature in *Over Prairie Trails* with the words, "The wilderness uses human material up" (11). Niels Lindstedt's development is a powerful illustration of this view. The desire to establish his material goal eventually obsesses him to a point where he is little more than an automaton designed to achieve this particular goal and having no other function. All possible weaknesses had to be eradicated to withstand the forces of nature. Human emotions thus have to be considered weaknesses since they distract the individual from his single-minded devotion to his task.

Over Prairie Trails and *Settlers of the Marsh* suggest that a new beginning on the Canadian prairie leads to fulfillment only on the material level. The person who undertakes this enterprise has the advantage of being able to limit the extent to which he exposes himself to society and its negative influences, but that advantage is counteracted by a physical environment whose pressures upon the individual to conform to its rules are at least as strong as those of society. The land is a law unto itself. The narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* had referred to himself as "me, the interloper" (67) when he tried to establish his will against that of the snow. In "The Flat Prairie" Grove went a step further. His statement, "man remains distinctly an interloper" (215), declares any human presence in this environment a shaky and endangered enterprise.

The prairie that Grove portrays in *Over Prairie Trails* and *Settlers of the Marsh* offers three options to the person who attempts to establish himself on it. He can, like Sigurdsen and Dahlbeck, acknowledge the superiority of nature, establish himself within its limits, and abandon all hopes for self-fulfillment; he can, like the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails*, acknowledge that nature is physically stronger than himself and withdraw into a social arrangement that at least allows him a certain mental independence; or he can attempt to overcome his weaknesses totally and fight for his self-realization. The example that Grove gives in Niels Lindstedt's fate is the one closest to Nietzsche's suggestion for self-realization, but this mode of life is extremely difficult, perhaps even impossible, to realize. Even somebody as strong-willed as Niels is incapable of overcoming his weaknesses and degenerates in the course of his striving. In his fight against nature

Niels becomes inhuman rather than superhuman, and his material success eventually becomes meaningless. Settlers like Amundsen and Sigurdsen illustrate the dehumanizing effect the prairie has upon those who try to establish themselves against it with normal means. Niels' fate shows that while strengthening his ability to achieve material success, the radical rejection of human weakness, that is in accord with Nietzschean suggestions, makes that dehumanization even stronger and creates human misery without generating superhuman fulfilment.

In this light, Niels' approach is disqualified as a guideline for the pioneer. Even after ascribing to Niels numerous traits that make him appear destined for success, Grove demonstrates that such success can be achieved only partially. In addition, even this partial success exacts a tremendous cost. The destructive consequences which such an approach has for the human personality render the material success made possible by such methods totally unjustifiable.

V. The Rule of the Passions

In the previous chapter we have seen that Grove portrays the task of establishing oneself in North America as a difficult enterprise which demands extraordinary strength and tenacity. On the Canadian prairie, the most important prerequisite for a settler's material success is that he be strong enough to resist the natural forces. These forces are in fact so powerful that a person has to concentrate all of his strength, his complete will to power, upon this struggle. Grove describes the meeting of individual and nature primarily as a power struggle. Consequently, Nietzsche's emphasis on power as the basic force of all existence provides an appropriate framework for the analysis of Grove's portrait. As we have seen from the experiences of the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* and Niels Lindstedt, attitudes that Nietzsche advocated may enable the protagonist to come close to realizing the physical elements of his goal.

Grove's protagonists are not Nietzschean characters, but the ambitions and reflections of Niels Lindstedt and the far more articulate Len Sterner – in particular their will to overcome their sexual passions – are very similar to those that Nietzsche debated in his writing. We know that Grove was aware of the Nietzschean concept that anything that can distract the individual from his task and weaken his will to power impedes his progress. Grove's protagonists are, however, far less capable of achieving self-control than Nietzsche had projected. In Nietzsche's perception, the necessary first step in any quest for self-realization is the overcoming of the passions. Only the person who has overcome his passions can hope to exploit the full potential of his mental and physical capacities.

In Grove's fiction, overcoming one's weaknesses and passions in order to gain success appears as a valid code of action as long as the protagonist exists in a social vacuum. Wife and daughter of the narrator in *Over Prairie Trails* are located – geographically and spiritually – at the end of his quest, but the essential concern of the book is the ambition to make the journey to them. This journey takes place in complete solitude, and we never learn whether the narrator's emphasis on self-control and overcoming his weaknesses has any consequences upon his interaction with his family.

In *Settlers of the Marsh*, the protagonist's attempt to overcome his passionate nature has disastrous effects on his behavior toward other people. The Nietzschean admonition to overcome one's passions in order to increase one's strength and power is directed at making the individual completely self-sufficient and, consequently, absolutely

self-oriented. Such a character is capable of leading, and even destined to lead, a solipsistic existence. Niels Lindstedt leads such a life during the first third of the novel. Although he believes that he has included another human being, Ellen Amundsen, in his vision of self-fulfilment, he lives in a social vacuum. The real Ellen Amundsen is as marginal to Niels' ambition as wife and daughter are to the narrator in *Over Prairie Trails*.

Niels' behavior toward Ellen Amundsen and Clara Vogel shows that the very concept of self-mastery which has contributed to his material success has made him unable to behave normally. His strong disgust at the thought of giving in to sexual passion constitutes a barrier to the marital life which is the core of his vision. In this side of Niels, puritan and Nietzschean characteristics reinforce each other. It is important to stress that puritan ideas alone do not suffice to explain Niels' behavior. In fact, the suppression of his passionate human nature, which he had considered essential for his success in life, causes his misery.

Grove presents a similar development in *The Yoke of Life*. Like Niels, Len Sterner dreams of living with a woman, but he can conceive of their union only in ethereal terms. Len's attitude is more extreme than Niels'; it is so radical that it leaves no room for the redeeming features that Grove could ascribe to Niels. In Len Sterner's story, Grove shows even more drastically than in *Settlers of the Marsh* the dangers of despising and fighting one's passionate nature.

Critics have attempted to explain Niels Lindstedt's fate from various angles, focussing on his actions and ambitions. Their accounts label Niels' character as deficient: Spettigue states that "Niels is incapable of rational understanding" (*European Years*, 202); Keith suggests that "his innocence appears extreme" ("Art," 32); Harrison refers to Niels' moral preoccupations as "in one way merely childish. . . [with] a naive black and white morality" (*Unnamed Country*, 139); Sutherland characterizes Niels as "just another character in Canadian fiction whose love relations are distorted by puritanical values" (*Second Image*, 81); and Stobie advances the view that "his adolescence or innocence is so protracted as to border on sheer stupidity" (*Grove*, 83). Far less attention has been paid to *The Yoke of Life*, but existing critical opinions parallel the judgments of *Settlers of the Marsh*. In *Unnamed Country*, Harrison refers to Len Sterner's "morbid sensitivity" (142) and "adolescent imagination" (148); Keith calls Len "confused and immature" ("Magnificent Failure," 108). While such labels mark the protagonists as confused, they

do not analyze the protagonists' psyches. Reading the characters of Niels Lindstedt and Len Sterner in the light of Nietzschean psychological concepts, we understand more about the protagonists' psyches and see how their thoughts and actions are connected.

Passions play a role in every aspect of human life, but sexual passion is central to human existence. Yet for Nietzsche, the whole complex of male-female relationships is primarily a source of danger to the individual. Rather than seeing the emotions generated by a family life as contributing something positive to a person's existence, Nietzsche sees them as a detriment to self-fulfilment:

> It seems . . . senseless if a man who has chosen for his mission the widest knowledge and estimation of universal existence, burdens himself with personal considerations for a family, with the support, protection, and care of wife and child, and in front of his telescope hangs that gloomy veil through which hardly a ray from the distant firmament can penetrate (*Human*, 1: 316).[1]

Nietzsche is concerned only with the self-fulfilment of the man. Thus woman appears to him as the enemy:

> And finally, woman! *One-half of mankind is weak*, chronically sick, changeable, shifty – woman requires strength in order to cleave to it . . . or, better still, she makes the strong weak – she *rules* when she succeeds in overcoming the strong. Woman has always conspired with decadent types, – the priests, for instance, – against the "mighty," against the "strong," against *men* (*Will*, 2: 300).[2]

From Nietzsche's point of view, there exists thus between men and women "the most abysmal antagonism . . . and the necessity of an eternally hostile tension" (*Beyond*,

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[1] "Aber ebenso ungereimt erscheint es, wenn Der, welcher die allgemeinste Erkenntnis und die Abschaetzung des gesammten Daseins zu seiner Aufgabe erkoren hat, sich mit persoenlichen Ruecksichten auf eine Familie, auf Ernaehrung, Sicherung, Achtung von Weib und Kind, belastet und vor sein Teleskop jenen trueben Schleier aufspannt, durch welchen kaum einige Strahlen der fernen Gestirnwelt hindurchzudringen vermoegen" (8: 307).

[2] "Endlich: das Weib! *Die Eine Haelfte der Menschheit* ist schwach, typisch-krank, wechselnd, unbestaendig, – das Weib braucht die Staerke, um sich an sie zu klammern . . . oder besser, es macht die Starken schwach, – es *herrscht*, wenn es gelingt, die Starken zu ueberwaeltigen. Das Weib hat immer mit den Typen der decadence, den Priestern, zusammen conspirirt gegen die 'Maechtigen', die 'Starken', die *Maenner*" (19: 261).

166).[3]

According to Nietzsche, women use their sexual appeal to strive for their own goals and obstruct those of the men. Despite acknowledging that sexual passion is undeniably part of life, Nietzsche asserts that a person who has not sublimated this passion is in constant danger of obstructing his will to power. Nietzsche also denies the importance of sexual fulfilment. Believing in an "antagonism between marriage and task,"[4] he has Zarathustra admonish his audience, "You shall not procreate but advance upward."[5] Nietzsche defines the ultimate aim for mankind as the achievement of a superhuman state of existence, and women are the most dangerous obstacle to this aim. In Nietzsche's perception, sexual temptation is so strong and destructive that he gives drastic advice in one of his most infamous epigrams: "Are you visiting women? Do not forget your whip" (*Zarathustra*, 93).[6]

Even if a man uses such methods to defend his will to power against the female temptation, he has no guarantee of success, since sexual passion cannot be eradicated by such simple means: "The illusion of sexual passion is a net which, when it has been torn up, keeps on weaving itself again."[7] The only way in which a person can be safe from this temptation is to overcome his sexual passions completely.

A person who wants to overcome a passion can suppress it or sublimate the energy of that passion into a desire for a different, higher aim. As I explained earlier, Nietzsche sees six basic methods of overcoming a passion:

> Shunning the opportunities, regulating the impulse, bringing about satiety and disgust in the impulse, associating a painful idea (such as that of discredit, disgust, or offended pride), then the dislocation [reorientation] of one's forces,

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[3]"Der abgruendlichste Antagonismus und die Nothwendigkeit einer ewig-feindseligen Spannung" (15: 186).

[4]"Antagonismus zwischen Ehe und Werk" (16: 426). This quotation is from the unpublished fragments of the years 1882 – 1885. The translation is mine.

[5]"Nicht fort sollst du dich pflanzen, sondern hinauf" (13: 87). Nietzsche's wordplay on the verb "pflanzen" is impossible to translate directly. This translation is my own, since Hollingdale's "You should propagate yourself not only forward, but upward" (*Zarathustra*, 95) misses Nietzsche's point.

[6]"Du gehst zu Frauen? Vergiss die Peitsche nicht" (13: 83).

[7]"Die Illusion des Geschlechtstriebes ist ein Netz, das, wenn es zerrissen wird, sich immer von selbst wieder strickt" (9: 456). The translation of this fragment from the time of *Human, All Too Human* is my own.

and finally general debility and exhaustion (*Dawn*, 108).[8]

These methods are by no means equivalent. The passions constitute an important source of energy which, under the right circumstances, can be directed to higher goals. Rather than eradicate a passion, a person should make himself immune to the temptation and then sublimate the passion into a source of strength. Nietzsche suggests how to conduct such a sublimation:

> We may bring about a dislocation [rechannelling] of our powers by imposing upon ourselves a particularly difficult and fatiguing task, or by deliberately submitting to some new charm and pleasure in order thus to turn our thoughts and physical powers into other channels. It comes to the same thing if we temporarily favour another impulse by affording it numerous opportunities of gratification, and thus rendering it the squanderer of the power which would otherwise be comandeered, so to speak, by the tyrannical impulse (*Dawn*, 107 - 08).[9]

Nietzsche's position toward sexual passion shows most clearly the shortcomings of his view of man. He claims that every action is motivated by the individual's will to increase his or her power (cf. *Zarathustra*, 137 - 38). Consequently, Nietzsche sees the desire for sexual fulfilment as nothing but a manifestation of the will to power. Walter Kaufmann has aptly summarized Nietzsche's position: "The feeling of potency is essential, while its sexual manifestation is accidental; and thus the feeling of sexual potency can be sublimated into [an] ultimate feeling of power" (*Nietzsche*, 222). The flaw in Nietzsche's reasoning is obvious. He does not acknowledge the essential difference in effect upon the self and the other between the sensual satisfaction created by sexual fulfilment and the spiritual satisfaction arising from power. Nietzsche's attempt to

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[8]"Den Anlaessen ausweichen, Regel in den Trieb hineinpflanzen, Uebersaettigung und Ekel an ihm erzeugen und die Association eines quaelenden Gedankens (wie den der Schande, der boesen Folgen oder des beleidigten Stolzes) zu Stande bringen, sodann die Dislocation der Kraefte und endlich die allgemeine Schwaechung und Erschoepfung" (10: 98 - 99).

[9]"Man nimmt eine Dislocation seiner Kraftmengen vor, indem man sich irgend eine besonders schwere und anstrengende Arbeit auferlegt oder sich absichtlich einem neuen Reize oder Vergnuegen unterwirft und dergestalt Gedanken und physisches Kraeftespiel in andere Bahnen lenkt. Eben darauf laeuft es auch hinaus, wenn man einen anderen Trieb zeitweilig beguenstigt, ihm reiche Gelegenheit der Befriedigung giebt und ihn so zum Verschwender jener Kraft macht, ueber welche sonst der durch seine Heftigkeit laestig gewordene Trieb gebieten wuerde" (10: 98).

explain sexual behavior in terms of power is clearly misleading. He disregards the sensual nature of sexual fulfilment and consequently arrives at unrealistic conclusions.

In his works, particularly *Settlers of the Marsh* and *The Yoke of Life*, Grove portrays sexuality as the strongest passion. A large part of *Settlers of the Marsh* is concerned with Niels' attempt to control his sexual passion, and we shall see that his fate is a good example of the danger that Nietzsche saw arising from a false attempt to control one's passions: "You wish to bid farewell to your passion? Very well, but do so without hatred against it! Otherwise you have a second passion" (*Dawn*, 302).[10]

Niels' delusion about his passions is increased by his tendency to define unrealistic goals. For example, Niels conceives the vision he hopes to realize without any knowledge of the actual circumstances on the prairie. He does not know where his farm will be or how he will build it, and the identity of the woman who is to complete his happiness is equally unknown to him. "He tried to see the face of the woman; but it entirely evaded him" (36). Niels' vision, culminating in his wish to build up a world of his own, is the expression of his inexorable will to power. Thus, when he believes that Ellen is the woman of his vision, he merely inserts her name and face into the blueprint of his vision without considering that the imagined Ellen might not correspond to the real Ellen in more than name and face.

In Niels' imagination, Ellen complements him perfectly. Niels realizes fairly soon that his interest in her is not purely spiritual: "He became conscious of the ultimate, supreme, physical desire: he wanted to feel her head sinking on his shoulders, her body yielding to his embrace" (49), but he rejects sexuality as "something in him which was lower" (46) and consequently as inimical to the realization of his dream. His idealization, or, in Grove's words, "the visionary glory which surrounded his thought" (46) of Ellen causes Niels to suppress his sexual passion for her.

Grove has Niels follow Nietzschean prescriptions for the attainment of success and happiness only partially and does not translate Nietzschean philosophy into fictional form. Niels' desire for a family life is clearly incompatible with Nietzschean ideals, but the manner in which Niels pursues his ambition and his distrust of his passions echo Nietsche's admonishings and warnings. Traditional approaches explain certain aspects of Niels' character, but Nietzschean concepts illuminate important traits such as Niels' will

[10]"Du willst von deiner Leidenschaft Abschied nehmen? Thue es, aber *ohne Hass* gegen sie! Sonst hast du eine zweite Leidenschaft" (10: 271).

to control his emotions and his aversion to all sexual passion. We find in Grove's characterizations Nietzschean traits uneasily mixed with non-Nietzschean ones. As pointed out earlier, Niels' sublimation of his sexual passion for Ellen is incomplete. She still remains the object of his passion; the farm is only a means to that end. Had Niels sublimated his passion in the manner that Nietzsche suggested, Ellen would no longer play a central role in his life. The energy of his passion for her would have been completely absorbed by his passion for the farm. In a development consistent with Nietzschean principles, Ellen could still be a part of Niels' future. Ellen's suggestion that Niels might be her "friend and brother" (112) is an apt image to characterize such a relationship. However, his inability to overcome his physical passion for Ellen makes it impossible for Niels to accept her suggestion and seek fulfilment in a moderated and realistic version of his vision.

Niels' will to power and the manner in which he intends to realize it are so fixed that he cannot accept reality. When Ellen rejects Niels, she renders his material success, made possible by his attempted sublimation, worthless in his eyes. Consequently Niels abandons his old ambition in favor of another which is quite different in perspective:

> A new dream rose: a longing to leave and to go to the very margin of civilization, there to clear a new place: and when it was cleared and people began to settle about it, to move on once more again to the very edge of pioneerdom, and to start it all over anew. . . . That way his enormous strength would still have meaning. Woman would have no place in his life (119).

In such a new life, he would not only evade the negative forces of society but also achieve something positive through his work as pioneer. Eventually he might even hope, although with very little probability, to encounter a society from which he would not have to flee because it does not threaten his sense of self. Most importantly, as we shall see, such a society would have to be completely free of any overt sexual temptation.

Niels' personality makes happiness impossible for him. The manner in which his will rules over his emotions, his strong suspicions of sexuality, and his will to make himself immune to sexual temptation demonstrate that his character is partially compatible with Nietzschean ideals. He is too Nietzschean to be successfully human, but his emotions and his desire for a family life show that he is too human to be successful as a Nietzschean. He is, in Nietzschean terms, too human to leave everything behind and start anew at the margin of civilization as he had done in emigrating from Sweden to the

Canadian prairie. Instead of withdrawing, he remains within society and falls victim to its temptations. Trying in vain to sublimate his passions, Niels behaves as Nietzsche had described in his first and third methods of sublimating passions (c.f. *Dawn*, 108). He tries to avoid temptation, and he associates negative images with sexuality. Niels' failure to gain control over his impulses indicates Grove's position that a person must accept his passions as parts of his human personality and give them due attention or deny his humanity altogether. Niels has to learn in a very painful way that he cannot change his character by a simple act of will.

Niels becomes the victim of human weakness because he has deluded himself about his strength. He sublimates only his desire for Ellen. His desire for Clara Vogel, more strongly, even exclusively, sexual, remains uncontrolled. In this relationship, Niels attempts to suppress his sexual desires, mistakingly believing that he can annihilate the temptation. He is aware of "the desire to see, and to listen to, the other woman whose look and voice sent a thrill through his body and kindled his imagination" (57), but he believes he does not have to deal with it. Even though he feels "guilty [and] . . . defiled as if he had given in to sin" (46) when he thinks of Mrs. Vogel, he expects the desire to disappear when he makes up his mind in favor of Ellen.

Niels abandons his guard because he lives under the delusion that he is in sufficient control of his sexual instincts to be immune to temptation. But the human element in him allows him to be seduced by Clara Vogel, an act that leads to their marriage. Niels' proposal to Clara results from a confluence of several factors which prevent him from interacting normally with women. Like Nietzsche, he considers sexuality a threat to the self. But at the same time, he is aware that sexual activity is an integral element of the happiness which he hopes to find in a family life. Only this family life justifies sexual activity in his eyes.

Niels' reaction after he has kissed Clara for the first time demonstrates his inability to cope with sexual passion:

> He had done what he had never done before: he had touched a woman: the touch had set his blood aflame. He almost hated the woman for what she had done to him. He wanted oblivion: he wanted death in life; and she had kindled in him that which he had hardly known to exist: she had given a meaning and a direction to stirrings within him, to strange, incomprehensible impulses. His instinct urged him to flight (121).

After he has succumbed to this temptation, Niels' code of values forces him to propose to Clara. The narrator leaves no doubt that Niels' inability to respond properly to this temptation leads him to make a grave mistake: "More and more Niels realised that the woman who had become his wife was a stranger to him" (126). Hypothetically, Niels can still justify his marriage by hoping for improvement, but very soon he is forced to see that he can never realize with Clara that life he longs for: "He did not want children out of this woman" (138). Any justification of his marriage collapses.

Niels' rigid principles and his fears have made him unable to cope with Clara's sexual appeal and his human response to it. His judgment of himself and the world around him according to standards inimical to human nature force him to condemn his marriage. Reflecting upon the breakdown of this marriage, Niels concludes that his misery is due to his inability to control his passions, a shortcoming for which he cannot forgive himself:

> What had led them together? Niels thought of the thrills which this woman had had power to send through him in years gone by. He thought of the night of their union: their pulses had beaten together: they had beaten together in lust. . . . His doom had overtaken him, irrevocably, irremediably: he was bond-slave to a moment in the past, for all future times (137 - 38).

Ronald Sutherland concludes from this predicament that "Niels Lindstedt is just another character in Canadian fiction whose love relations are distorted by puritanical values" (*Second Image*, 81). A reading of *Settlers of the Marsh* which focusses on the novel's Nietzschean elements shows that Niels' disgust at sexual activity goes further than the puritanic rejection of extramarital sex and of the pursuit of pleasure for its own sake.[11] Niels believes that "lust was the defiling of an instinct of nature: it was sin" (138).

When we include Nietzschean concepts in our reading of *Settlers of the Marsh*, we can see that Niels' situation is more complex than that of a character who, in Sutherland's words, is faced with "the usual torment and self-punishment" (*Second Image*, 81) because he cannot control his sexual instincts. In an obvious logical

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[11]Schuecking suggests that "the Puritans recognized marriage as being essentially a sharing of spiritual-sensual experience - a mixture of religion and nature. . . . Nature was recognized for what it is and accepted as such. As early a writer as Perkins (1558 - 1602) . . . speaks of marital intercourse as being itself neither good nor evil . . . and he insists that such intercourse should proceed with holy mutual joy as a comfort and as mutual testimony of love and goodwill" (38).

contradiction, Niels both rejects his sexuality and seeks to fulfill a vision of happiness that includes a married life, and thus sexual activity. Nietzsche's portrait of the will to power best explains the tenacity and single-mindedness of Niels' pursuit of a specific mode of life - married life with Ellen. The Nietzschean antagonism between will to power and passions more completely illuminates Niels' fate than does Sutherland's reference to puritan morality.

Grove points out that Niels is at least as responsible for the collapse of their marriage as is his wife (153 - 58). Clara is human, dominated by her passions, demanding and deserving the right to be judged as human. Niels behaves naturally when he briefly succumbs to Clara, who is in his eyes "the very picture of allurement and temptation" (151 - 52). Consequently, giving in to this temptation creates a natural relationship. But since he aspires to overcome his natural responses, Niels cannot justify his behavior to himself, and retreats to a quasi-superhuman position of contempt for letting himself be seduced by Clara:

> He saw clearly now that nobody, in this relationship of marriage, can ever make the best of a bad bargain. It is all or nothing. Give all and take all. If you cannot do that, stand back and refrain. But then, he had not refrained. He had taken her (160).

Niels' ruminations show him undergoing the development that Nietzsche had characterized as false and detrimental to the achievement of a higher state of being, because its central force is a

> moral mania, which, instead of insisting upon the control of the passions, sues for their extirpation. Its conclusion always is: only the emasculated man is a good man. Instead of making use of and *economizing* the great sources of passion . . . , morality - this most shortsighted and most corrupted of mental attitudes would fain make them dry up"(*Will*, 1: 306 - 07).[12]

Having identified his wife as "the very picture of allurement and temptation" (151 - 52), Niels reacts by suppressing the sexual instincts which had made him respond to her. The narrator has Niels avoid all contact with his wife and employs the traditional technique of

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[12]"Moralisten-Wahnsinn, welcher, statt der Baendigung, die Exstirpation der Leidenschaften verlangt. Ihr Schluss ist immer: erst der entmannte Mensch ist der gute Mensch. Die grossen Kraftquellen, . . . statt ihre Macht in Dienst zu nehmen und zu *oekonomisieren*, will diese kurzsichtigste und verderblichste Denkweise, die Moral-Denkweise, [sie] versiegen machen (18: 267 - 68).

making horses symbolic of the sexual drive (c.f. Ferguson, 7). Soon after the total collapse of communication with his wife, Niels begins to mistreat his horses, and the killing of his horse immediately after the murder of his wife symbolizes Niels' attempt to destroy in himself that passion which he holds responsible for the frustration of his aim in life. Earlier, after Ellen's rejection, Niels perceives the only manner in which his extreme attitude toward sexuality would permit him to live peacefully: "Woman would have no place in his life" (119). But by giving in to sexual temptation, he gives his moral mania free reign.

This moral mania culminates in the murder of Clara. Grove stresses in the description of Niels' act the

> peculiarity of his nature that, having thought out and laid down a plan, he must go on along the demarcated line and carry out that plan even though circumstances might have arisen which made it absurd (152).

When he discovers the truth about his wife, Niels' capacity ti thiink rationally collapses. His moral mania takes complete hold of him and forces him into a fatal course of action which reduces him to an automaton:

> His muscles tightened and remained tight. It was as if a powerful spring inside of him had been tightly wound and then arrested by some catch, either to snap under the strain or to unroll itself in the natural way by setting some complicated wheelwork into irresistible motion, grinding up what might come in its way or attempt to stop it (186).

The rigid moral principles according to which Niels had attempted to live his life have led him beyond reason. The murder – which Niels commits without any control over his actions – might be justified from the point of view of these principles, but it is humanly unjustifiable. Narrative commentary on an earlier scene introduces another angle to Niels' dilemma. The comment, "He could not help himself; he was he; he could not act or speak except according to laws inherent in him" (160 – 61), declares that Niels is only partially to blame for his actions.

In interpreting Niels' moral dilemma, critics have accused Grove of creating an unlikely configuration of extreme characters. Desmond Pacey's complaint is representative of this position:

> There are undoubtedly men as sexually naive as Niels; [women] as neurotically timid as Ellen, and as exuberantly lustful as Clara; but that the three of them

> should exist contemporaneously in a pioneer settlement as small as this is scarcely probable (*Grove*, 43).

Pacey's questioning of these characterizations is valid. Grove's portrait may not be supportable by sociological data, but we have to remember that Grove was a novelist, not a historian. The portrait of society in *Settlers of the Marsh* is a coherent artefact which derives it legitimacy from its internal coherence and from its contribution to the novel's general impression. Concentrating on the extremity of these characters overlooks their plausibility in the society of *Settlers of the Marsh*. Giving in to carnal urges appears to be generally accepted. The most obvious example is Mr. Amundsen. Grove hints at his inability to control his passions early in the novel, again employing the horse as symbol. "They're famous run-aways. . . . But they don't run away with her. It's him they smash up every once in a while" (22). Niels' situation is thus unusual only insofar as he wants to resist his passions. While this ambition itself may be positive, the manner in which Niels attempts to realize it is so misguided that his behavior becomes representative of the moral mania against which Nietzsche had warned. Other people around Niels are equally tempted by their passions but are less able to control themselves than he. The society they form is characterized by the general tolerance of a person's giving in to his passions. This situation has consequences reaching beyond the fate of the person who is being ruled by his passions.

Ellen rejects Niels because her father's exploitation of her mother has made sexuality appear demeaning and fatal to her. Throughout the novel, Amundsen is portrayed as a very cold man completely in control of his emotions. But the reference to Amundsen's horses (22) and Ellen's account of her parents' marriage demonstrate that Amundsen has not overcome his sexual urges. He has suppressed his emotions and consequently has no scruples about giving in to his sexual urges with a ruthless selfishness.

The attempt to suppress their emotions has similar effects on Amundsen and Niels, but Amundsen's motivations are completely different. He appears to be motivated by the wish to control all aspects of his life. Amundsen's attitude toward having given in to sexual passion also differs from Niels'. While Niels strives to justify his action and accept its consequences, Amundsen arrogates to himself the right to dismiss any perspective other than his own. Although there are parallels between the two characters, Amundsen is far more sinister and ruthless than Niels. Amundsen's inability to behave

normally has consequences far beyond his wife's tragic death. He makes happiness impossible for his daughter and for Niels, thus illustrating Nietzsche's claim that uncontrolled passion can lead to disaster, directly or indirectly.

Mr. Amundsen's behavior is only the most extreme case; numerous references to prostitution – Mrs. Vogel, Mrs. Dahlbeck, "the Hefter woman," the prostitutes in town – indicate the sexual permissiveness of this society. As long as Niels is exposed to such blatant sexuality, he is in constant danger of giving in to the temptation. Hypothetically, a different society – one that completely hides any references to sexuality – might enable Niels to realize his potential. However, such a society cannot exist. Given Niels' extreme attitude toward sexuality, the only environment which does not threaten Niels' self-perception is one in which sexuality does not exist. But while Niels would be able in such an environment to realize the material aspects of his vision and to be a successful farmer, the married life he strives for will necessarily be out of reach for him while he rejects sexuality as a part of his human nature.

As long as he can dream of his ideal union with Ellen, this paradox is no threat to Niels' mental stability. However, after Ellen has refused to marry him, Niels rejects everything he associates with married life and concludes that he is different from ordinary human beings. When Niels reflects about the futility of his life after Ellen's rejection,

> He looked upon himself as belonging to a special race – a race not comprised in any limited nation, but one that cross-sectioned all nations: a race doomed to everlasting extinction and yet recruited out of the wastage of all other nations (119).

Although this passage is supposedly a rendering of Niels' thought, it is clearly thinly disguised narrative commentary. The statement is far too abstract and comprehensive to have originated in Niels' mind. He is aware only of his own fate, so that such a generalization can only come from the narrator who has assigned his fate. The narrator's comment upon Niels' alleged self-perception, "But, of course, it was only the dream of the slave who dreams of freedom" (119), emphasizes the basic futility of Niels' ambition. Human interaction is so strongly permeated by passions, particularly sexual desire, that he is unable to attain peace of mind or happiness in this world. Thus it is questionable whether Niels could really live with the freedom he dreams of.

The textual history of *Settlers of the Marsh* makes it very difficult to determine which final fate Grove had planned for Niels Lindstedt. The published novel is essentially a condensation of the two completed volumes of the "Pioneers" trilogy, with, however, a major change in the ending. Both existing versions of volume two of "Pioneers" conclude with Niels' decision to hand himself over to the police after the murder in the expectation that he will be hanged. The final chapter of the published novel, "Ellen Again," was added later.

This conclusion reverses the expectation created by the rest of the novel. Throughout *Settlers of the Marsh*, Grove depicts sexuality so negatively that Niels and Ellen appear extremely unlikely ever to accept it. But in the last chapter Grove implies that people like Niels and Ellen are capable of overcoming their fear of sexuality. The final sentence of the book, "As they go, a vision arises between them, shared by both" (217), leaves the ending open. Grove does not specify what that vision contains, but his frequent references throughout the novel to Niels' initial vision, which changes in detail though not in perspective, recall Niels' old vision of a happy future with Ellen. The original final paragraph of the chapter – deleted from the published version – shows the fulfilment of Niels' original dream:

> And as they go, a vision arises between them, shared by both.
>
> They are sitting together in a small room, at winter time, the winter of life: with the wind howling and stalking outside; the wind of the world. In the stove nearby a fire is roaring, radiating its genial warmth. A lamp is shedding its homely light from above over head and shoulders. And as they look at each other with a quiet smile, they are listening to the pitter patter of little feet sounding down from above, where the children are romping for a few minutes before they bolt into their beds.[13]

The rejected ending makes it possible to argue that Niels can realize his vision once he and Ellen have understood the error of their attitudes toward sexuality and can accept all aspects of human life, including the passions. Since the protagonists appear to

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[13]Fifth of five examination booklets containing the last scenes of *Settlers of the Marsh*, Frederick Philip Grove Collection, Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, box 11, folder 5, [3]. Even though the consequences of Niels' and Ellen's reunion are external to the published novel, they contribute to this analysis. The topic continued to occupy Grove who wrote about it not only in the unpublished sequel to *Settlers of the Marsh* but also in the published *The Yoke of Life*.

have overcome these difficulties, the impression arises that Grove was optimistic about Niels and Ellen's chance of achieving human happiness. Again, the discarded epilogue supports this impression:

> Niels and Ellen lived together as man and wife for over 40 years. They had three children. But their married life forms the topic of a different story. It was full of grief and sorrow, full of care and turbulation [*sic*], but also full of joy and trust.[14]

This life is not the Edenic bliss that Niels had expected from his marriage with Ellen, but it is certainly much more human than Niels' point of view had allowed for in the preceding chapters.

My reading of the book leads me to the conclusion that the final chapter does not sufficiently prove that both Niels and Ellen have overcome their obsessive fear of sexuality sufficiently to lead a satisfying married life. Eric Thompson summarizes the view which asserts that Niels and Ellen can look forward to a satisfying future:

> In portraying Niels' reconciliation with the faithful Ellen, Grove notes the conquest of his 'passion' by his mature understanding of love. . . . Compared to the catastrophic ending of *The Yoke of Life*, this repose testifies to the author's hope that the tragedy he saw in life was not always all-conquering (26).

We have to take Thompson's interpretation with some reservations, because physical attraction forms a significant part of Niels' response to Ellen's presence: "Without looking, Niels was aware of her figure. A somewhat flat bust; wide, round hips" (211). Although he contemplates the physical nature of his relationship to Ellen in prison, he repeats his earlier perception of her: "His memory re-awoke: he saw her again as she had been in the years of their intimacy, their brotherhood: she was she, after all: the only woman" (213). Niels' attempt to come to terms with his reawakening desire for Ellen suggests that he is uneasy about a relationship that includes sexual passion:

> It was a painful process: as if the parts of a broken limb were being fitted together, slowly, tentatively, by a skilled but callous physician who did not seem to succeed. It was as if some part were missing; or rather as if a superfluous part were there, preventing the perfect joint. And that superfluous part which prevented the past and the future from fitting together was a

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[14]Grove Collection, box 11, folder 5, [4].

> strange, new hope – a hope which it was almost painful to feel and altogether forbidden to face.
>
> It was a mere adumbration of the thought of a possible outcome, a mere foreshadowing of a state of things that might, might come about like a miracle hardly to be visualised. It was at once suppressed with a beating of the heart, a scarlet flooding of the brain. . . . To face it seemed equivalent to precluding it: it was such a tender, delicate thing of a hope (213 – 14; Grove's ellipses).

The basis of Thompson's argument is the narrator's assertion, "It is not passion that will unite them; what will unite them is love" (216). Ellen stresses that her rethinking of the past has led her to accept and long for sexual fulfilment:

> I, too, am a woman. I, too, need more than brotherhood. . . . I knew then as I know now that it is my destiny and my greatest need to have children, children. . . . And I knew then as I know now that there is no man living on earth from whom I would accept them if not you (217).

This passage suggests very strongly that Ellen expects and demands Niels to act toward her as a husband, not as a brother. Niels' vision of his mother and Sigurdsen merging into one (210) implies that he has overcome his revulsion at the thought of sexuality, but his reflections about Ellen and his response to her after this vision indicate that he is still doubtful about his ability to accept the physical aspects of his marriage.

The end of the published novel offers no assurance that Niels has overcome his reservations. Ellen's ambiguous statement, "Whether we can or not, we must try" (217), indicates the chances Niels and Ellen have for a happy future. While they are both willing to develop a good marriage, doubts about their success linger in their minds as well as in those of the readers. By publishing this open ending, Grove leaves the central concern of the novel unresolved and gives room for conflicting interpretations of Niels' ability to achieve human fulfilment.[15]

At the conclusion to *Settlers of the Marsh*, Grove thus allows for a moderate optimism about sexual relationships. However, he did not sustain this outlook for long.

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[15]Early reviews show that the ending is potentially misleading. For the reviewer of *The Montreal Daily Star* "the book closes on a note of expiation and a prospect of peace through the regenerating influence of love" (Pacey, ed., 106); and the reviewer of the *Saskatoon Phoenix* saw Niels and Ellen face "a glad and confident future" (Pacey, ed., 110). Such strong optimism is clearly not warranted by the text.

He began a sequel, possibly the third projected volume of "Pioneers." All that remains, probably the only part of it that was ever written, is a fragment of seventeen pages entitled "Ellen Lindstedt."[16] The fragment is significantly different in tone from the moderate optimism on which *Settlers of the Marsh* had ended. "Ellen Lindstedt" is an account of the beginning of Niels' and Ellen's marriage. Niels is clearly as unsuited for this marriage as he had been for his first. Married life involves too much human behavior for Niels to reconcile it with his suspicions of this behavior which dominated him throughout *Settlers of the Marsh*. Niels' dilemma becomes obvious when he considers the physical consequences of his marriage:

> He felt that, now they were married, unless he were willing to offend his wife, he would have to assume the part of a husband; for he had passionately loved the girl in the past, even when he was bound to another; and this newly entered into union was, or should have been, to him the fulfillment of his heart's desire. On the other hand, he had in the course of his first marriage, so poignantly come to understand how much there is in love, of the earth and the flesh. . . . During the weeks and months they had now been engaged he had vowed to himself to subdue all that he now considered the coarser side of his nature (Makow, "Ellen Lindstedt," 274).

This passage indicates that when faced with the physical reality of his marriage to Ellen, Niels reverts to the Nietzschean contempt for sexual passion that had already made his marriage to Clara so catastrophic. The learning process that Niels supposedly underwent in prison appears not to have been thorough enough to make him accept sexuality. The short fragment does not state whether Niels and Ellen have a successful marriage, but a scene summarized by Makow indicates that on their wedding day there is a serious problem between the two:

> When the [*sic*] pass Niels' farm without turning, Nils' [*sic*] colts become agitated and appear ready to bolt. Instinctively, Ellen who has much experience with runaways, reaches for the reins in Niels' hands. She immediately realizes her mistake when Niels deflects her movement with his arm, and quickly brings the horses into line. 'On Niels' forehead, a frown had settled; Ellen bit her lip and flushed with annoyance. Was this an omen?' ("Ellen Lindstedt,"

[16]The fragment is in the possession of Mr. A.L. Grove. The following discussion is based upon the synopsis given in Makow, "Ellen Lindstedt."

274).

In a literal reading, our doubts about the marriage are caused by the power struggle over a trifle and by Ellen's involuntary violation of Niels' male pride. If we take the horses again as symbols of Niels' sexual passion, we read in this passage that during his prison term Niels has learned only a part of a crucial lesson. While he may have come to accept sexuality as part of human nature in theory – expressed in his vision of his mother and Sigurdsen melting into one (210) – he is not able to translate his theoretical acceptance into practice. In this reading, Niels has not yet learned to deal with his human impulses properly.

These passages show that in "Ellen Lindstedt" Niels exhibits the distrust of physical passion that had characterized him throughout *Settlers of the Marsh*, thus casting a doubt on Niels' change in the last chapter of the published novel. This attitude suggests that "Ellen Lindstedt" was impossible to complete. The short fragment indicates that Grove reverted to the portrait of Niels that we find in the first five chapters of *Settlers of the Marsh*. But even a sequel developing Niels' character as he appears in the last chapter of *Settlers of the Marsh* would have created serious difficulties. Grove would have had to pay considerable attention to Niels' coming to terms with his sexuality, and a book like that would have been impossible to publish in Canada in the 1920s. In my understanding, *The Yoke of Life*, the other novel in which Grove focusses a protagonist's struggle with physical passion, attempts to clarify those issues which "Ellen Lindstedt" might have addressed. This opinion is based not only on the similarities in content, but also on the fact that the dark tone of "Ellen Lindstedt" is far closer to that of *The Yoke of Life* than to that of the ending of *Settlers of the Marsh*.

In *In Search of Myself*, Grove defined the first prerequisite of a new settlement: "Order must arise out of chaos; the wilderness must be tamed" (227). Parallel to Nietzsche's view that self-mastery is an indispensable prerequisite for success, Grove suggests that the wilderness to be tamed is both the material one of the bush and that of the human passions. Niels Lindstedt's experience shows that passions are an integral part of human life. The vision of overcoming them appears to be nothing but a dream of freedom. Niels' attempt to free himself from his passions creates not the higher state of existence that Nietzsche had envisioned but rather the opposite, a moral mania that makes Niels a danger to himself and others.

In this pessimism Grove is most clearly in opposition to Nietzsche. In Grove's fictional world, human beings are much less capable of handling their passions than Nietzsche had envisaged. Placing Niels in the pioneer society of the Canadian West, Grove comments about this society as well as about the way in which Niels reacts to it. *Settlers of the Marsh* demonstrates that both have serious shortcomings. The combination of these flaws can lead, as the novel demonstrates, to a catastrophe. Not ruled by a puritanical morality, this society does not deny the existence of sexuality. Consequently, it contains a temptation that Niels cannot resist. But Niels' fight against this temptation, conducted in a manner discussed and condemned by Nietzsche, has even worse effects.

"Ellen Lindstedt" was apparently never finished and certainly never published. *Settlers of the Marsh* thus remained the last word on Niels Lindstedt and his chances for self-realization. In April 1926, only six months after the publication of *Settlers of the Marsh*, Grove was working on two other books in which the protagonists experience the conflict between sexual passions and visions of spiritual fulfilment. He offered his novel "The Canyon," which remained unpublished, to a publisher, and he was finishing *The Yoke of Life* (*Letters*, 34 – 35).

Settlers of the Marsh and *The Yoke of Life* exhibit considerable parallels, but we would be wrong to regard *The Yoke of Life* simply as another version of the earlier novel's theme. Like Niels, Len Sterner strives to realize mutually exclusive goals. His longing for a purely intellectual and spiritual life is clearly incompatible with his strong desire to fulfill his physical passions. Len Sterner's personality and fate are more extreme than Niels'; the Nietzschean traits of his character are more powerful.

Reading *The Yoke of Life* in the light of Nietzschean philosophy illuminates Len's ambitions and his difficulties in pursuing them. Len's extreme confidence in his own abilities, his desire for spiritual-intellectual self-fulfilment, and his disgust over physical passion are attitudes that Nietzsche would have applauded, but Len undermines his chances for Nietzschean success by his complete lack of self-criticism and his inability to withstand sexual temptation. It is possible to dismiss Len's attitude as that of an egotistic dreamer, but we can achieve significant insights into this attitude if we analyze it with the same framework we have used for Niels Lindstedt. As we have seen, Nietzsche explained human behavior as determined by the opposing forces of will and passions. This dichotomy is very similar to Grove's portrait of Len as torn between the

extreme polarities of spiritual ambition and passions. Consequently, including these Nietzschean concepts into our analysis of Len Sterner illuminates this confused and confusing character.

Len Sterner exhibits several attitudes which parallel Niels Lindstedt's. Like Niels, Len envisions a future which includes a specific woman as part of his life. Both men develop their visions independently of reality and without understanding the character of the woman of their dreams. Both are dreamers whose ambitions are frustrated, particularly by the women they want to include in their lives. The two novels demonstrate the dangers of pursuing a vision without asking whether this vision can be reconciled with reality.

Differences between the two characters, however, indicate that *The Yoke of Life* is a reconsideration of the issues treated in *Settlers of the Marsh* with a stronger Nietzschean emphasis. Niels has some qualities that could earn him human sympathy or pity, but Len has none. While Niels is frustrated by a combination of his own weaknesses and external factors, Len Sterner brings about his own destruction when he acts as if he were in superhuman control of his life. Difficult as it was, Grove could still construct a muted happy end for Niels; no such outcome would have been possible for Len.

Nietzsche's is not the only philosophy evident in *The Yoke of Life*. Grove knew Platonic philosophy, and, according to Henry Makow, "the best example in print of the Platonic underpinnings of Grove's tragic vision is *The Yoke of Life*" ("Grove's Treatment," 528). Several ideas in the novel can be traced back to Plato, but I do not agree with Makow's interpretation that "Grove's portrayal of Len is almost explicitly Platonic" (531). Makow errs in his contention that Grove follows Plato's idea that sexual desire is negative because it pursues a realizable ideal (531). Len's destruction is due not to the pursuit of a realizable ideal but to the contradiction of pursuing an extreme ideal – mastering all human knowledge and at the same time being attracted by a physical passion which he sees as a danger to his intellectual goals. The destructive power which Grove ascribes to Len's passion for Lydia is as great as the one Nietzsche had seen in all passions. In Nietzschean fashion, Len believes that his pursuit of a passion renders him incapable of overcoming his weaknesses and realizing his will to power in an intellectual life. The Platonic ideas about sexuality that Makow stresses merely complement the Nietzschean elements.

Nietzschean philosophy thus illuminates the basic forces in Len's character. Nietzsche's concept of the will to power as a force that attempts to rearrange the world according to the individual's wishes allows us to understand Len's distorted view of reality. From the beginning of the novel, Grove makes clear to the reader that Len dismisses facts which do not suit his purposes. The most obvious example of this habit is his reaction to discovering that he has mistaken a deer for a unicorn (68 - 69):

> Two or three years ago he would have been thrilled by that rational explanation. . . . Now he was ready to scorn and spurn the merely reasonable things. The unexplainable made its appeal. . . . He went on; and as he did so, the rational explanation of what he had seen fell away; the vision itself remained (69 - 70).

If this were an isolated incident, we could explain it as a consequence of Len's youthful romanticism. Yet the novel shows Len constantly idealizing his environment and refusing to see the truth.

This distortion of reality particularly affects Len's relationship with Lydia, but it seriously hampers his other pursuits as well. Grove emphasizes that Len's passionate pursuit of knowledge prevents him from effectively approaching intellectual tasks:

> While his reasoning powers flew ahead to explore the limits of the human mind in the conceptions of space and time, he was still troubled with the technical stumbling blocks of the mere arts. He was a poor writer and felt ashamed of it; when reading, he was always tempted to grasp at the meaning of a sentence as a whole, instead of spelling it out word for word (32 - 33).

Len has an overriding ambition: "One day he was going to master all human knowledge in all its branches. Whatever any great thinker or poet or scientist had thought and discovered, he was going to make his own" (33). Len is firmly convinced that he can realize his ambition, believing that he can accomplish anything, no matter how ambitious, if only he strives hard enough. Len thus differs clearly from Niels who not only has far more moderate and realistic goals but who is also more capable of realizing them.

Yet, Len's development parallels Niels' very strongly in combining ambition with longing for a particular woman. Len's attempt to pass the provincial school examinations - a success he considers a necessary prerequisite for giving in to his sexual longings for Lydia - echoes Niels' gathering strength for the building of his farm by relating its existence directly to Ellen. Len repeats Niels' thinking, and the consequences are the

same:

> Action was needed, not trifling with inconsequential bits of knowledge. His books seemed baubles. Yet he had undertaken this task for Lydia's sake. . . . He had sworn not to see her again till he had something tangible to show for his work. He must pass his examinations. . . . The spirit in him needed reincarnation and found it in a fiction of her. Work helped; and he worked indefatigably (177 – 78).

Len pursues his academic goals so obsessively that his feelings for Lydia alone do not suffice as explanation. We can understand Len's obsessive studiousness in terms of Nietzsche's observation about the possible consequences of attempted sublimation of one's passions:

> If we have spent our intellect in order to gain mastery over the intemperance of the passions, the sad result often follows that we transfer the intemperance to the intellect, and from that time forth are extravagant in thought and desire of knowledge (*Human*, 2: 137).[17]

Len's pursuit of his intellectual goal can be called "intemperate," particularly since he is almost blind to his own intellectual shortcomings yet is convinced that he will reach a perfect life through his pursuits. From the point of view of Nietzschean values, he makes yet another mistake. Putting such emphasis on Lydia's opinion, Len is no longer sole judge of himself. Thus he compromises the self-sufficiency Nietzsche regards as a key factor for self-realization.

Attitudes that Nietzsche praised and encouraged figure more strongly in Len's character than in Niels Lindstedt's. Most importantly, Len has a much stronger sense of himself and his own importance. Early in the novel, the narrator proclaims, "Len was in the presence of a revelation; and what was revealed to him was the majesty of his self" (46). Grove's extravagant phrase expresses Len's strong sense of self-importance, yet it also implies a lack of self-understanding. The heightened perception of himself implied in the term "majesty" is a prerequisite and justification for radical self-realization. This emphasis on the revealed self is decidedly Nietzschean. However, Nietzsche had envisaged self-realization as a process of conscious deliberation and not, as in Len's case,

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[17]"Hat man seinen Geist verwendet, um ueber die Masslosigkeit der Affecte Herr zu werden, so geschieht es vielleicht mit dem leidigen Erfolge, dass man die Maasslosigkeit auf den Geist uebertraegt und fuerderhin im Denken und Erkennen-wollen ausschweift" (9: 134).

of passionate, unthinking, self-adoration.

Len's view of Lydia demonstrates that inflexible perceptions blind him even to obvious truths. Like Niels, Len is neither ready nor willing to accept a reality contradictory to his imagination. Niels, however, eventually finds a mode of life which incorporates some of his desires and yet he acknowledges his limits. This un-Nietzschean behavior enables him to accept his fate. Much of Niels' behavior is understandable through conventional psychology, but Nietzschean psychological concepts help greatly to understand Niels' extreme state of mind after he has been rejected by Ellen. In Len's case, however, Nietzschean concepts shed an important light on every stage of his psychological development. Niels' ambition is egocentric, but his pioneering efforts also contribute to the material well-being of his neighbors. Len's ambition is egocentric, totally egotistic, and self-indulgent. He cannot see himself as a social being.

Len's delusions about himself are at the root of his problems. Since he mistakenly believes that he can control his instincts, they gain a power over him of whose strength he does not seem aware. The manner in which his passions rule him becomes most obvious in the image he develops of Lydia. The best example of this behavior is the sequence leading up to their first kiss. Len becomes aware that a part of himself is in stark conflict with his ambition to master all human knowledge. Grove describes Len's thoughts in a passage charged with allusions to Platonic philosophy:

> In Len it was the soul which was awakening. . . . A longing was in him, unrecognized as such: a first adumbration that a human being is, in mind and soul, imperfect by itself; that somewhere in this world it must find its complement. A half is seeking the other half which will complete it into a self-contained whole. . . . Vaguely Len rose and went on. A strange, bitter-sweet unrest seemed to impel him (67).

Len is thus ready, though not prepared, for a romantic experience. His vision of a unicorn reveals his frame of mind since he sees not a real animal but a mythological creature with strong symbolic connotations: "The unicorn was early accepted as the symbol of purity in general and of feminine chastity in particular" (Ferguson, 11). The fact that his memory of Lydia, especially of "the edge of a dress on a slender girlish bosom, rising, falling in the rhythm of a breath" (70), follows immediately upon his imagined unicorn shows how closely Lydia is related to the ideal of chastity in Len's perception. Len never acknowledges that Lydia is basically unknown to him; he has

already decided that she is the personification of purity and chastity who can "interpret for him what he had felt this afternoon" (72).

Very early in the novel, Grove raises doubts that Len could find happiness in this relationship. Grove uses a biblical reference to describe Len's first awareness of his attraction to Lydia:

> He turned and entered the class-room with that strange feeling which may have stood between Adam and Eve when the serpent had whispered his message. *"Eritis sicut Deus scientes bonum et malum"* (40).

Grove repeats the reference to the biblical story of the first sin (Genesis 3:5) in describing Len's vision of Lydia before he goes to see her:

> At last, when this vision [of Lydia's throat] arose once more, it became so disturbing that Len got to his feet. With half-closed eyes and half-parted lips he stood and held his breath, conscious that he himself blushed all over his body, the blood slowly rising into his face with a feeling of heat.
>
> Suddenly the eternal wonder of the growing being seemed as of its own accord to take a direction. Something in him seemed to whisper, "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil" (70 - 71).

A close reading of these references shows that Grove uses the story of Adam and Eve in a manner that embodies the Nietzschean view of temptation. The relationship between Len and Lydia is significantly different from that between Adam and Eve. Len cannot claim the role of Adam for himself, since Lydia's temptation is the creation of Len's passionate imagination. Genesis 3 stresses that Adam sinned by giving in to Eve's active temptation, but that Eve bears more guilt, for transgressing and for encouraging Adam to transgress. Lydia, however, is innocent, since she does not actively tempt Len. How different Len's position is from Adam's becomes obvious from the fact that the words, "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil," arise from "something in [Len]." Len both imagines the temptation and gives in to it.

Grove's biblical references imply that Lydia's sexuality is as dangerous to Len as the apple had been for Adam and Eve. If Len gives in, he will learn very much about the relationship of the sexes, but this knowledge will make him human. Len's ambition, however, is to transcend normal human passions: "Far countries he was going to see with his eyes: strange thoughts he was going to master with his mind: all the beauty there was in the world he was going to grasp with his soul" (61). He wants to live an

exalted life of mental sensations. Such a life comes close to the ideal of self-realization pronounced by Nietzsche. Len would then live beyond good and evil, knowing them from deliberation, not from actual experience.

Although Lydia tempts Len very strongly, this scene culminates only in a kiss. This moderation may stem from the tacit moral restrictions on Canadian novels in the 1920s, but a sexual encounter would also have been thematically inappropriate. Faced with the physical reality of his passion, Len would have been unable to continue envisioning Lydia as an ideal.

In the logging camp, torn out of his idealized world and confronted with a new reality,

> Len lost his interest in books. [This] was largely due to the fact that other men and their destinies began to absorb him. Real life pulsated all about him; and suddenly it took on a glowing, alluring appearance which it had never had (115).

Under the influence of what Grove calls in awkward terms "the attraction which hot, spicy, unclean things have for the unformed mind" (119), Len begins to question his values. "Len's old desire for book knowledge seemed strangely futile. Some conception arose in him of the web of events. . . . What is commonly called education seemed suddenly largely a matter of words" (119). Len thus realizes that his former perception of life is incomplete and thus flawed, but his observations in the camp threaten the intellectual ambition which had been the cornerstone of his self-image:

> He was in a queer state of mind. His eyes had been opened with regard to vast realms of knowledge which had so far been closed to him. It was not book-knowledge; it was knowledge of the nether realms of life. Yet this new knowledge did not make him glad; it made him feel guilty (129).

Torn between his ideals and observations, Len witnesses an incident of extreme sexual lust (130). The extreme dichotomy that Grove constructs between the spiritualized ideal world for which Len strives and the rough life in the camp that attracts Len shows very clearly that a reading of *The Yoke of Life* as a realistic novel is inadequate. The world that Grove creates in the novel is one of unrealistic polarities, but its starkness is appropriate to represent Len's perception of it.

Unable to shut out what he has witnessed, Len seems, at least momentarily, better reconciled to reality than he had been. Now he is able to see that Lydia is not an

object of his will but a human being in her own right:

> So far, Lydia had been something removed from all earthly experience. His realization of her had been something spiritual, almost mystical. . . . She had been an ideal, apart from cares and desires. . . . A new picture intruded; the concrete picture of an individuality discovering herself through no contact with him (138 - 39).

However, Len still idealizes Lydia. He has understood that she differs from his original perception of her and that he basically does not know her, but he continues to believe that she is his ideal complement. Moreover, he is so repelled by sexual lust that - in contradiction to his new knowledge - he reverts to interpreting sexuality only in spiritual terms. He ignores that Lydia has a self of her own and lets his will create for her a role in his self-fulfilment:

> What he had thought to be love, ardent adoration, the presentiment of heavenly mysteries to be revealed at some future time, a deification of things within himself, gave way to passion. That she was different from what he had thought her seemed to make her all the more desirable, making it imperative that the mysteries between them should be revealed at a nearer date (140 - 41).

Len now acknowledges his passion for Lydia, but his belief that he can incorporate this passion into his vision of a perfect life shows that he has not yet reconciled his new knowledge with his old ideals:

> He found it hard to fit himself back into his old surroundings. Lydia was like a stranger to him. . . . It was most disturbing to find that his memory picture of those whom he had left behind did no longer tally with the realities. The world was in a flux. The very foundations of life seemed to rock (146).

Sensing that reality denies the path to happiness in which he had believed, Len rejects this insight, insists on his ambition, and lets it dominate his actions.

How little Len has changed becomes evident in his exclamation to Lydia, "To me, where you are, is Eden" (158). Convinced that Lydia really is the woman he wants as part of his vision, he kisses her. In his narrow interpretation, the kiss is his submission to his physical desire:

> His brain was in a whirl; prickling currents were sweeping through him. A minute ago, his whole being had been mind; now it was all sense. He felt he

> was being conquered by something which was not his own; as if another self were rising within him, eclipsing *him* – what was "he" in himself – and merging him into the fiery sea of his blood (161).

This paragraph is stylistically awkward, but it successfully describes Len's being taken over by his passions.

Realizing that he has yielded to his passions, Len is faced with an unsolvable dilemma. The ideal life he had envisaged was based on the idea of his and Lydia's sexual purity which he believes he has destroyed by kissing her passionately. Yet, in another clear self-contradiction, he persists in believing in the ideal.

Grove again refers to the biblical story of original sin in this context, yet once again his interpretation of the myth resembles the Nietzschean view of temptation. Initially, Len had envisaged Lydia as Eve in paradise, but after their kiss she becomes "Eve indeed, but after the fall" (162). This comparison is of double significance. After the fall, Len/Adam can no longer enjoy ideal life in paradise but has to accept the shortcomings of earthly life. At the same time, Len's characterization of Lydia as the fallen Eve implies her guilt as temptress:

> Having, if only for a moment, yielded to the purely physical part of the attraction which the girl exercised on him, he felt almost defiled; and, naturally, he was inclined to cast the blame on the girl (164).

Len completely ignores that he had projected the role of temptress upon Lydia and that he had even longed for that temptation. In fact, he alone is responsible for his problems. Len's spiritual dilemma is as serious as Adam's. Having given in to the temptation, Len cannot hope to reach the superior level of existence he had sought; he is doomed to live an imperfect life as a flawed human being.

Len thus realizes that his only possible relationship with Lydia is based on physical passion. But he immediately suppresses this insight. His initial view of Lydia has become so much a fixed part of the self-realization he envisages that he cannot alter it:

> At last he sought refuge in an artifice. He saw Lydia etherealised, de-carnalised. . . . She stood before his mental vision, untouched, all the more desirable for having been tempted, white in immaculate innocence. In order to justify his condemnation of the world, he needed to idealise her; and he did so with the facility of his youth. She must be enshrined so that she might save

> him; him, the flesh had begun to trouble. To give in to the flesh meant utter ruin. The spirit in him needed reincarnation and found it in a fiction of her. . . . In thinking of things which she had said, he omitted all those which did not agree with the new picture of her (178 - 79).

Only Len's personal needs determine Lydia's role in his concept of reality. Eventually, he takes over her life for the satisfaction of his will to self-realization. Len's will to power renders him totally incapable of acknowledging and accommodating other people's interests and perspectives. As a result of his self-deception, Len focusses on mutually exclusive goals. On the one hand, he desires an imaginary pure Lydia; on the other hand, he is sexually attracted to the human Lydia - the symbol of her virginity has been replaced by "the edge of her undergarments heaving over rounded breasts" (161). Len's image of Lydia combines incompatible adolescent and adult longings.

In opposition to Nietzsche's vision of the path to a higher existence, the conflict between Len's will to realize himself in an intellectual life and his passionate desire to possess Lydia creates a form of schizophrenia:

> Len knew that in this girl, for better or worse, he had met his fate: forever after she would obsess him. Whether she was his or not, he was hers. Only thus could he save himself. . . . He had seen in her what might make him a beast; for that he substituted what might make him a god. As in him, there was something god-like in her, different though it might be. And he subordinated himself, not to her, but as a part is subordinated to the whole, the whole consisting of the two of them united. They were equinascent, of equal rights and equal worth; and, whether she saw it or not, they fitted together: they formed the possible whole (165 - 66).

Up to this point, Len's perspective is clearly distinct from that of the narrator, allowing a reading of *The Yoke of Life* as a realistic portrait of a highly romantic character. But in the second half of the novel, this distinction disappears. Len's point of view becomes dominant. It is impossible to read the second half of *The Yoke of Life* as a realistic narrative like *Fanny Essler* or *Our Daily Bread*. Grove did not, however, indicate to the readers that parts III and IV of *The Yoke of Life*, lacking a discernible auctorial or philosophical position, demand a different approach than the first two parts. The narrative becomes as confused as its focalizer, Len Sterner's mind, and develops more and more into an artistic failure. In order to pursue Len's psychological development,

Grove sacrificed the frame of the realistic novel and created "a climax straight from the tradition of romantic melodrama" (Sutherland, *Grove*, 54).

Blodgett complains that Grove's males – and none more strongly than Len Sterner – are "hopelessly teleological" (126). A consideration of the male characters' *telos* is thus appropriate, particularly since a teleological approach to life is a basic element of Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche demanded, after all, that a person subject every aspect of life to the ultimate purpose of gaining complete control over existence. Len is, as Blodgett confirms, "a man of fixed and absolute purpose" (120), and this purpose becomes the reader's main focus of attention. Lydia, the only other character in the novel who has at least some individual traits (cf. Blodgett, 140), is not sufficiently developed for her point of view to balance Len's. We know so little about Lydia that we cannot follow her development from village flirt to city prostitute – a development typical for the extreme polarities in the novel. *The Yoke Of Life* explores the validity of visions as a guideline for conducting one's life. As Blodgett asserts, "[Lydia] must fit [Len's] vision; she has none of her own" (126). By concentrating so exclusively on Len's point of view, Grove prevents Lydia from having a better developed identity in the narrative than she has in Len's mind.

Part III of the novel is basically an exposition of the futility of living in a vision. Len's ambition is doomed to fail:

> Lydia was not what he had thought her to be. Was she lost to him? Lost or not, she had given him the data for an ideal after which he must strive though he knew he could never find it (222).

Len's reason should tell him that his life is self-destructive, but his passions have influenced his will to power in such a way that a union with Lydia – impossible though it may be – appears as the only form of self-realization acceptable to him.

Len's experiences in the city – which culminate in the visit to the brothel (250 – 53) – as well as his frustrating life on his parents' homestead lead him to withdraw even further into his fantasy:

> He had a plan. That plan must be carried out. By this time, his preoccupation with Lydia was complete and, so he felt, fatal. He must find her; and, having found her, he must redeem himself of what he now called the curse of sex (275).
>
> He cursed the world and all the facts of sex. . . . [Lydia] he purified,

deified in his thought (281).

By failing to acknowledge or express his passions, he has allowed them to overwhelm him. The rigid fixation of his desires upon Lydia and the obvious failure of his vision have reduced Len's mind to a state of inertia. Had Grove ended the novel here, we could have viewed it as an artistically failed attempt to write a fictive study of neurosis.

Part IV of *The Yoke of Life* is an artificial construct, but as a result of the character developments earlier in the novel, this appears to be the only way for Grove to conclude Len's story. The last part of the novel completes a "curious shift in the narrative from a basically 'realistic' to an unabashedly 'symbolic' level" (Keith, "Magnificent Failure," 104). In this section of the novel, the Nietzschean element is less prominent than before. Its place is taken by another set of ideas prominent in Europe at the turn of the century. Len's attraction to death, a recurrent theme of part IV, parallels the fascination with death prominent in the art of Oscar Wilde, Villiers de l'Isle Adam, and other Decadents. These parallels show yet again the presence of turn-of-the-century European intellectual concerns in Grove's Canadian writing.

The last seven chapters of *The Yoke of Life* demand different criteria, particularly of plausibility, than the rest of the novel. Grove abandons realism when he has Lydia take care of Len and eventually surrender her whole being to him. It has been suggested that Lydia's decision is the only morally significant act in the book (cf. Blodgett, 140), but I do not think that it is useful to see Lydia's fate in the context of moral values. In my opinion, her decision is so out of character that it is unbelievable. Her actions are so clearly a construct to advance the plot that moral concepts are inappropriate for an interpretation.

Len and Lydia's situation is similar to that of Fanny Essler and Friedrich Karl Reelen. Reelen, too, had demanded that the woman subject herself to his will, but Fanny had resisted:

> She couldn't be what he wanted to make of her, couldn't be his creation. It had to be as if she were his equal from the very beginning. What he was, she was. That's how it would have to be! Otherwise she wouldn't be able to stand it (2: 196).

In *Fanny Essler*, the realistic narrative convincingly depicts Fanny's refusal to abandon herself to Reelen's will. But *The Yoke of Life* focusses on Len's fate, not on that of the woman. To demonstrate the dangers of Len's approach to life, Grove has to make Lydia

participate in Len's self-realization.

In Len, Grove reverts to the character he depicted in Friedrich Karl Reelen. Both characters have a very strong sense of self and a strong will to self-realization. However, Reelen combines self-control and absolute reliance on his own judgment, whereas Len is torn between his self-control and his passions and submits himself to Lydia's acceptance or rejection. For Reelen, the situation is clear; Fanny is to be his creation and decoration. Len's perspective, however, is confused. Lydia is to be his creation, but he is willing to make himself subject to this creation.

Len can hope to fulfill his vision of himself only if he is completely apart from the human world. Consequently, Grove removes him and Lydia from the normal world and puts them into a world of their own. In this extreme world – another construct that is rather unbelievable but necessary to advance the story – Lydia changes so much that she appears as a complement to Len. This development becomes most obvious through changes in her vocabulary:

> She felt very near to him. This word . . . stamped them as belonging together, marked off from the world. Consciously she picked up other words; and during the days that followed, the two acquired a language known only to them (311).

As she seems to fulfill his vision of her, Len begins to consider life with her as paradise (329). Rejecting everything he had experienced and learned about life, Len creates a new idealization of Lydia which combines his spiritual and sexual longings for her:

> He thought of the new Lydia whom he had seen, resurrected and unlike her who had stirred impure blood; unlike also the deified, ethereal being of his fancy years ago; yet purified by he knew not what. He knew not what? By love. Could they still be the perfect whole, he and she? Yes, he said to himself (324).

Len's persistence in idealizing Lydia and his conviction that he will be able to fulfill his sexual desires doom their imaginary paradise. "There was a touch of wistfulness and sadness about them; as of a foreboding that they were shortly going to be driven out from the garden of Eden" (329).

Grove's repeated reference to the biblical story of original sin clearly indicates that to the end of his life, Len remains unable to come to terms with the temptation he sees in Lydia. To unite with her, he has to accept a sexual encounter which will confirm his humanity and thus destroy their edenic life: "We are human" (338), and life in

paradise is not for flawed human beings. Dying at least saves Len from the assault of passions he cannot control. By making them commit their ritual suicide, Grove connects Len and Lydia with the decadent art of the late nineteenth century. Blodgett has shown the parallels to Villiers de l'Isle Adam's *Axel* (115 - 16). These parallels - which are far too strong to be coincidental - help us understand the novel's symbolic ending which distances the book from its opening level of realism. The ending does not, however, resolve the novel's central moral question: whether Len's fate was the inevitable result of human nature in conflict with his unrealistic superhuman ideals. Unfortunately, Grove is unable to put Len's story into a larger context, since he has given up the critical distance between narrator and protagonist in the second half of the novel. Len and Lydia's common suicide is thus an unsatisfying ending to an unsatisfying novel.

Nietzsche saw the passions and the will to power as the opposing forces whose interplay dominates human psychology. From his perspective, a person can give direction and meaning to his life himself only if his will to power overcomes and sublimates his passions. Nietzsche even listed promising means to achieve this end (c.f. *Dawn*, 108).

In *Settlers of the Marsh* and *The Yoke of Life* Grove shows the disastrous consequences of attempts to suppress rather than regulate the passions. Niels Lindstedt is able to control his passions temporarily, but in the process he becomes inhuman rather than superhuman. Unable to sublimate the strongest and most basic passion, his sexual desire, Niels tries to subdue it and falls into the moral mania that Nietzsche had envisaged as the consequence of an erratic attempt to overcome one's passions. But Grove moderates this bleak picture of a character's chances for controlling and realizing his self by portraying Niels as victim and victimizer and by creating for him a potential happy ending that departs significantly from the message conveyed by the main portion of the novel.

Grove failed in his first attempts to publish works which repeat the pessimistic view of sexual relationships and the necessity to acknowledge one's sexuality properly presented in most of *Settlers of the Marsh*; "Ellen Lindstedt" remained unfinished, and "The Canyon" did not find a publisher.[18] Thus only *The Yoke of Life* demonstrates fully

[18]Written probably in 1924/25, "The Canyon" has the same basic theme as *The Yoke of Life*. Harold Tracy is torn between his ambition to write poetry and his physical passion for his wife, Frances. Tracy has a less distorted psyche than Len Sterner, but he, too, lives in a circle of frustrations from which he does

the dangers of attempting to subdue the passions instead of dealing with them properly. *Settlers of the Marsh* portrays the seriousness of the problem, but the last chapter leaves room for a positive outcome. In *The Yoke of Life*, Grove depicts the futility of trying to find happiness by suppressing the passions and striving for a purely spiritual and intellectual existence. The passions are so integral in human nature that a passionless existence – which Nietzsche saw as leading to superhumanity – is impossible to reach for a human being. Len's fate demonstrates that Grove saw especially sexual passions as so powerful that they can hardly, if at all, be overcome.

This conviction is the basis of a crucial dichotomy in Grove's oeuvre. As Blodgett observes, "the burden that Grove places on his female characters [is] to lead men into the human and temporal world" (138). From the point of view of Nietzschean values, this is a fatal role, since the human and temporal world is the one a person should overcome in favor of a superhuman existence. The means by which the females fulfill their task is sexual temptation. Desmond Pacey's conclusion that Grove "would prefer that [sex] did not exist" (*Grove*, 128) is true, but not in the simplistic sense that Pacey implies.

Our susceptibility to sexual passions is too much a part of our being for us to expect that we could ever overcome it. *Settlers of the Marsh* and *The Yoke of Life* show that the passions have to be acknowledged and dealt with realistically. The fates of Niels Lindstedt and Len Sterner show that otherwise the passions cause indefinitely more harm than they would if they were acknowledged and given due attention.

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[18](cont'd) not know how to escape. Writing poetry makes him neglect his wife, and devoting himself to his wife impedes his creativity. Both alternatives make husband and wife feel guilty, so that the only "solution" is, again, suicide. This time, however, the female partner sacrifices herself for her husband's ambition which eventually finds fulfilment. "The Canyon" is an even weaker novel than *The Yoke of Life*. The emphasis on the philosophical theme is even stronger, and the characters are equally unbelievable. The most interesting aspect of the manuscript is that Grove set the story in the urban environment of Winnipeg, demonstrating that he was primarily a novelist of ideas who discussed these ideas with whatever materials seemed appropriate to him. For further information see Makow, "Grove's 'The Canyon.'"

VI. The Will to Patriarchal Power

The characterizations and plots of the four Canadian books we have analyzed so far demonstrate that happiness cannot be won by suppressing human nature with all its shortcomings. Grove portrays as a serious danger any attempt to eliminate human passions by having Niels Lindstedt and Len Sterner turn into virtual psychopaths who are a danger to themselves and others. The two are undoubtedly extreme characters, but Grove shows throughout his oeuvre that insistence upon a vision of self-fulfilment has serious negative consequences for every human being, not only for the individual but also for the people involved in his life. Grove indicates clearly that human nature sets definite limits to the extent to which a person can control his or her life. Grove does not focus exclusively on protagonists obsessed with suppressing their emotions and passions. In *Our Daily Bread*, *Fruits of the Earth*, *Two Generations*, and *The Master of the Mill*, Grove portrays normal characters. We shall see that Grove's portrayal of personal relationships on every level, not only sexuality, contains numerous Nietzschean elements, most importantly the quest for individual power.

This chapter and the following one will examine the usefulness of the Nietzschean concept of the will to power for an analysis of Grove's portraits of social interaction. In this chapter, I will discuss Grove's portrait of the conflicts within the family using Nietzsche's concept of the will to power; and in the following chapter, I will examine evidence of Nietzschean ideas in Grove's depiction of the forces shaping contemporary society. In *Our Daily Bread*, *Two Generations*, and a considerable portion of *Fruits of the Earth* Grove portrays the configuration of powers within the family, especially the patriarchal will to control the children. In *Fruits of the Earth*, and more centrally in *The Master of the Mill*, he depicts the power structures of local and even national politics.

In the protagonists of *Our Daily Bread*, *Fruits of the Earth*, and *Two Generations* we see a clear development in their understanding of the nature and consequences of patriarchal power. John Elliot persists in his will to dominate his family until his death. Abe Spalding moderates his will to power over his family, but the ambiguous ending of the novel permits an interpretation which emphasizes the merits of Abe's initial attitude to life. Ralph Patterson, finally, learns that his will to power over his family is irreconcilable with his desire for an emotionally satisfying family life. *Two Generations* thus completes the pattern established by *Our Daily Bread* and *Fruits of the Earth*.

From the point of view of Nietzschean philosophy, social life is dominated by the will to power, since the will to control one's life applies to both spiritual and physical aspects of life. Life emerges as a complex competition of various wills to power when Nietzsche declares the will to power central to all existence: "Where I found a living creature, there I found will to power. . . . Only where life is, there is also will: not will to life but . . . will to power" (*Zarathustra*, 137 – 38).[1] Power, central to Nietzsche's interpretation of life, becomes the origin of values: "There is nothing in life that has any value other than the degree of power"[2] Increasing one's power thus becomes the most important goal for every creature. The use of this power is equally important: "A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strengths" (*Beyond*, 21).[3] Consequently, facilitating the use of power is a very important objective of a person's will:

> Every animal, and hence also *la bete philosophe*, instinctively strives for an optimum of favourable conditions under which it is free to discharge fully its power and attains its maximum consciousness of power (*Genealogy*, 140).[4]

According to Nietzsche, the only acceptable norm is the self which strives for power; everybody is his own judge, accepting nobody else's values. The consequence of this individualized approach to values is a

> *perspective factor*, by means of which every centre of power – and not man alone – constructs the rest of the world *from its point of view* – that is to say, measures it, feels it, and moulds it according to its degree of strength (*Will*, 2: 120).[5]

This perspectivism obviously has far-reaching consequences for the individual's response to other people's perspectives:

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[1]"Wo ich Lebendiges fand, da fand ich Willen zur Macht. . . . Nur, wo Leben ist, da ist auch Wille: aber nicht Wille zum Leben, sondern . . . Wille zur Macht" (13: 148 – 49).

[2]"Es giebt nichts am Leben, was Werth hat, ausser dem Grade der Macht" (18: 47). This translation is my own. Ludovici's version, "There is nothing on earth which can have any value, if it have not a modicum of power" (*Will*, 1: 51) is rather imprecise.

[3]"Vor allem will etwas Lebendiges seine Kraft *auslassen*" (15: 20).

[4]"Jedes Thier, somit auch la bete philosophe, strebt instinktiv nach einem Optimum von guenstigen Bedingungen, unter denen es seine Kraft ganz herauslassen kann und sein Maximum im Machtgefuehl erreicht" (15: 383).

[5] "*Perspektivismus*, vermoege dessen jedes Kraftcentrum – und nicht nur der Mensch – *von sich aus* die ganze uebrige Welt construirt, d.h. an seiner Kraft misst, betastet, gestaltet" (19: 106).

> My idea is that every specific body strives to become master of all space, and to extend its power (its will to power), and to thrust back everything that resists it. But inasmuch as it is continually meeting the same endeavours on the part of other bodies, it concludes by coming to terms with those (by 'combining' with those) which are sufficiently related to it – *and thus they conspire together for power (Will,* 2: 121).[6]

The objective of action is thus the increase and exercise of one's power over oneself and others. The ultimate goal is to create a configuration in which one's own perspective is the only valid one.

Nietzsche's views have far-reaching implications for the conduct of life. Since the increase and exercise of power is the highest possible goal, pursuing this power justifies every action. Refraining from an action that would increase one's power is doubly negative, not only preventing the increase of one's power, but also confirming and increasing the power over the individual of that factor – such as a human being or a moral code – which made one refrain from action. In practical terms, this means that people should stop at nothing in order to increase their power over their lives. Eventually, nothing figures in the world but what increases the power of its beholder. Other factors – such as human compassion or moral codes – do not even enter the person's perceptions. Problematic as such a view of the world is at the best of times, it generates a destructive conflict in an encounter between two people striving for power. Their respective views of the world may differ so radically as to make them incapable of comprehending each other's point of view. Conflicts between various wills to power occur inevitably in Nietzsche's perception of the world, and the only solution that he advocates is for the individual to be strong and determined enough to make his own point of view prevail.

In Grove's families the father usually attempts to subject all other members of the household to his will and in the process destroys many important figures in his life, especially his wife (c.f. Atwood, 122 – 23). Atwood sees the origin of this behavior in the man's desire to impose his will upon a physical environment which he perceives as

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[6]"Meine Vorstellung ist, dass jeder specifische Koerper darnach strebt, ueber den ganzen Raum Herr zu werden, und seine Kraft auszudehnen (– sein Wille zur Macht:) und alles das zurueckzustossen, was seiner Ausdehnung widerstrebt. Aber er stoesst fortwaehrend auf gleiche Bestrebungen anderer Koerper und endet, sich mit denen zu arrangiren ("vereinigen"), welche ihm verwandt genug sind: – so *conspiriren sie dann zusammen zur Macht*" (19: 106).

hostile. Far from being limited to Grove's characters, this attitude appears in many works of the Canadian West. Blodgett summarizes the characteristic role of the father in most western Canadian fiction as that of a negative force:

> As autocrat, he is invariably the focus of a negative field. As semantic figure, he is a sign for ending. This is important, for he is always projected critically as an end in himself. Exclusive, he confides in no one; he is repressive, particularly in a sexual way. He cannot be a sign of continuity (95 - 96).

Blodgett's reading is accurate, but it does not identify the origins of such portraits. Atwood's explanation that the environment is responsible for the father's behavior is unconvincing, particularly in Grove's case. His *Maurermeister Ihles Haus* follows exactly the same pattern although it was written in Germany.

Reading the actions of John Elliot, Abe Spalding, and Ralph Patterson as the results of their wills to power enables us to gain insights into Grove's developing outlook on life. All three novels harshly criticize approaches to life and self-fulfilment that are compatible with Nietzschean values, but only the later novels, particularly *Two Generations*, emphasize alternatives to the destructive attitude exhibited by John Elliot.

Grove tried to link his treatment of conflicts between generations - a recurring theme of his novels - with Shakespearean tragedy when he claimed that "the natural title of *Our Daily Bread* would have been *Lear of the Prairie*" (*Myself*, 440). In his essay "The Novel," published a year after *Our Daily Bread*, he aligns every pessimistic treatment of this conflict with Shakespeare:

> Every father is a King Lear. The eternal conflict between parents and children results always in some sort of tragedy. If the children are vitally stronger, the tragedy is that of the parents; if the parents are vitally stronger, the tragedy is that of the children (*It Needs*, 125).

Through this parallel, Grove implies honors for his work that it does not deserve. John Elliot's fate not only fails to fit the classic concept of tragedy that underlies Shakespeare's plays, namely the tragic character's realization of his error; it even lies outside of Grove's own definition of tragedy:

> The tragic quality of Moses' fate - combining the terror that crushes with Aristotle's catharsis which exalts - lies in the fact that he accepted that fate of his; that he was reconciled to it; that he rested content with having borne the banner this far: others would carry it beyond. In this acceptance of

> acquiescence lies true tragic greatness: it mirrors the indomitable spirit of mankind (*It Needs*, 87).

The only Grove novel in which the generation conflict has some tragic consequences is *Fruits of the Earth*, but even those elements in no way justify Grove's linking his work with Shakespearean tragedy.

While traditional concepts of tragedy are not prominent in Grove's novels, Grove's treatment of the conflict between the generations reflects key elements of the Nietzschean conflict between different wills to power. Grove uses the term "vitally stronger" to describe the victorious party. If we interpret the term to mean "stronger willed," Nietzschean concepts greatly help to illuminate the change in moral values and outlook that is the most important development in Grove's generations trilogy, *Our Daily Bread*, *Fruits of the Earth*, and *Two Generations*.

John Elliot, the central character of *Our Daily Bread*, resembles Niels Lindstedt before he becomes entangled in his passions.[7] Like Niels, Elliot "was a dreamer" (6). Believing in his abilities and in the validity of his dreams, he had left the parental home in Manitoba and gone to an area "devoid of all the comforts of even slightly older civilizations" (5). Elliot's affluence shows that the individual can realize his material ambition, especially when the material goals are moderate enough to be reconciled with the physical reality of the prairie. Unlike Abe Spalding in *Fruits of the Earth*, Elliot does not perceive nature as hostile. Believing that "you can't fool the land" (4, 79, 209), Elliot has been able to raise a large family and to build "the largest and most commodious dwelling of the whole district outside of the towns" (5). Like Niels Lindstedt, Elliot considers the building of the farm not as an end in itself but as the prerequisite of another goal:

> Through all his activities, then, a single purpose had run: the purpose of honourably raising his family, a large family at that. . . . That single purpose had coordinated all things for him, had justified them, had seemed to transform his whole life with all its ramifications into a single, organic whole with a clear

[7]Grove spares John Elliot many difficulties that impede other characters. This aspects of the novel becomes obvious not only from Mary Elliot's statement, "he may have been merely less tempted," to explain her father's honesty (29), but also from the fact that Elliot had been able to find a suitable wife without being hindered by his passions.

> and unmistakable meaning. . . . To live honourably, to till the land, and to hand on life from generation to generation: that was man's duty; that, to him, in spite of all doubts, had meant and still meant serving God (189).

In keeping with his narrow vision, he chooses a wife "with one single object in view: that of securing to himself a mother of his children" (6).

When the novel opens, Elliot has realized his material ambition, which differs only slightly from Niels Lindstedt's, and thus seems to have proven that a person can establish himself on the Canadian prairie as long as he is not overwhelmed by his passions. In his own eyes, John Elliot leads the best possible life and receives his justification from the most powerful source: "He had lived and multiplied; he had grown, created, not *acquired* his and his children's daily bread: he had served God" (190).

Whether the others who are part of his life, especially his wife and children, share his view is originally of little importance to Elliot. Justifying his behavior and his self-centered perspective on the world by his material success, Elliot has established himself as the center of power in his family. Ignoring the reaction of his wife and children, he uses this power to regulate everybody's lives. From the beginning of the novel, Elliot denies his children the natural desire for independent lives. Instead, he sees them only as elements of his own life:

> His old dream, that of raising a large family honourably, had been replaced, slowly and imperceptibly, by a new one: that of seeing his children settled about him as the children of the patriarchs of Israel were settled about their fathers (7).

The unwillingness of John Elliot's children to remain subject to their father's will forms the basic plot of *Our Daily Bread*. Ricou suggests that simple psychology explains this conflict: "Elliot's dream is doomed, not only because of its naive idealism, but also because it fails to allow in the children the very spirit of independent self-assertion which made Elliot himself a pioneer" (56). Although this interpretation explains some of the conflicts in the novel, it does not provide an explanation for the vehemence of these conflicts and the extremity of the respective positions.

Reading *Our Daily Bread* in the light of Nietzschean philosophy reveals that the conflicts between Elliot and his children are conflicts between irreconcilable wills to power. In his statement, "the Elliots show a selfish inability to understand the fundamental impulse of children to move beyond parental protection and become

independent" (57), Ricou identifies Mrs. Elliot with her husband, but the novel clearly makes her a mediator who postpones conflicts during her lifetime. The disintegration of the family after Mrs. Elliot's death shows clearly that her love and humanity, not Elliot's will and success, had kept the family together. For the sake of their mother's love the children had been willing to acquiesce to their father's demands upon them. But when John Elliot increases his demand for power over his children after his wife's death, nothing prevents the children from asserting their own wills to power and thus from resisting his.

The conflict between John Elliot's will to power, which he exercises in defining roles for his children, and the children's will to chose their own roles is clearly more extreme than the generational conflict portrayed by many other authors.[8] Elliot's demands upon his children far exceed normal standards:

> To him, John Elliot, his children, still unborn, had seemed to be a re-birth, a re-creation of himself. In them, his ideas and ideals would be multiplied; they would convert that of his dreams into reality which he himself might fall short of realizing to the full. They would be a means of multiplying his own personality (9 - 10).

Seeing his children only as means of enhancing his own achievements and power, he cannot allow them to make any independent decisions, and even feels "that his sons and daughters-in-law should be picked by himself" (77).

Briefly, Elliot had granted that his children were not simply the sum of their parents' qualities:

> The thought had grown in him that his children must necessarily be a compound of the two parent natures; and slowly, though reluctantly he had accustomed himself to that idea till he had accepted it. . . . A strange, new

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[8]Read superficially, John Elliot's behavior toward his family appears to be the same as that of other patriarchal characters in literature, such as George Pontifex in Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* and Caleb Gare in Ostenso's *Wild Geese*. The difference in Elliot's position becomes evident if we compare him with Gare. Caleb Gare is essentially a villain "better suited to a Gothic novel" (Bobak, 98), without a satisfying psychological basis and without any redeeming features. He is clearly the villain and Ostenso evokes no sympathy for him. Elliot, however, is motivated by an uncomprehending desire to do the best for his children and does not realize how strongly he suppresses them. Like Gare, Elliot is a victimizer, but he is also a victim for whom the reader feels some muted pity.

> knowledge had come to him. As they grew up, these children were less and less a continuation of himself; less and less even a blending of the parent natures. In each of them a third thing had appeared, their individual being (10 - 12).

Since this individuality conflicts with the domination Elliot wants to exert over his children as part of his personal self-realization, Elliot suppresses this insight and continues in his attempt to mold his children according to his plans. After his wife's death, Elliot again briefly seems capable of accepting that his children are individual beings whose characters he cannot influence:

> [Like a developing photo] his children appeared to him. The developing solution was life itself. They had been mere blanks. . . . Like those first patches on photographic print certain peculiarities had asserted themselves in each of them, mysterious in their significance. . . . Development went on; and suddenly character and fate became readable as the features connected themselves to each other. Correct them? How can you correct what you do not know? Blame them? The picture on the blank sheet appeared because the hidden chemistry of the underlying strata had been influenced in some incomprehensible way. Only that appears which was already invisibly traced in its layers. There was something uncanny about it. We can but become what we are. . . (135).

However, Elliot does not draw any practical conclusions from this insight. It appears that his will to force his children into roles which he defines is stronger than his understanding that his children will not cooperate with him. Grove prevents the reader from better understanding Elliot's motivation by inserting a gap of ten years into the narrative at this point. When the narrative resumes, Elliotiis - unexpectedlyfor the reader - still clinging to his vision of a patriarchal self-realization.

John Elliot's will to realize a specific vision of self-fulfilment is stronger than his rational perceptions of the obstacles to its realization. Rather than combine his own will to power with those of his children in order to strive for a common goal - the solution that Nietzsche had envisaged for conflicts in which no clear winner emerges (*Will*, 2: 121) - Elliot insists on his initial vision of self-fulfilment, refusing to accept his children's independence and eventually condemning their way of living. This condemnation, however, is based on his uncomprehending glimpse of Cathleen's urban life:

> Half the purpose of his whole existence was gone. His children were scattered over two provinces of this country; they had freed themselves of the paternal

> rule: they were rebels in the house of their father: their aims were not what his aims had been. Their lives were evil; their lives were chaos; and through their lives, his own was chaos (191).[9]

Although Elliot rejects the lifestyles of his children, his anger is rooted in the impact of his children's failures on his own goals. When he develops a new vision of reassembling his family,

> once more there seemed to be some purpose in life, some aim. That aim was to assemble his children about him one day, to see them all together again; to feel once more that this was his family, his seed 'to multiply as the stars in heaven' (244).

This passage demonstrates the egotism of Elliot's plan and Elliot's inability to acknowledge other people's wills. Even at this late stage, he never considers that his children might have different perceptions and ambitions.

Elliot's odyssey in book three of *Our Daily Bread* is an overly long exposition of his failure to establish a satisfying relationship with his children. Moving from child to child, rejecting everything he sees and being rejected by everybody he encounters – except his spiritual kin, Pete Harrington – Elliot experiences the collapse of his patriarchal dream, symbolized in the collapse of the house Elliot had intended as the geographical center of the patriarchy. Although he sees the extent of his failure, Elliot is blind to its causes. He is unable to see that he cannot win emotional fulfilment using the approach that had made him successful as a farmer. Regarding his children as subject to his will, he misinterprets his plans for them not as demands but as a service:

> He had tried to show an interest in his children: what did he live for except for them? He had tried to refocus their outlook on himself, on the parental home. He had failed (239).

Grove thus establishes Elliot's rejection of his children's emotional needs. Elliot's obsession with his will parallels very closely Nietzsche's belief that the realization of the will to power is the only path to self-fulfilment.

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[9]Although Elliot's statement is certainly extravagant in its harshness, Grove leaves no doubt that Elliot has good reason to condemn Cathleen's lifestyle which is dominated by material and social ambitions and leaves no space for the agrarian values for which not only Elliot but also Grove himself repeatedly expressed his preference (c.f. "Democracy and Education").

Elliot's destiny so fully denies his ambition that he is mentally unable to cope with it. What begins as a deterioration of his mental faculties - "he was conscious of curious lapses in his mental activities; as if the continuity of time were broken" (302) - ends in his withdrawal into an imaginary world in which his convictions and ambitions are unchallenged:

> As a rule he lived with the phantoms of the past. He spoke to his wife, silently, hardly moving his lips; or he gave instructions and advice to John, at the time when John first began to farm for himself; or he pleaded with Gladys and Mary, defending himself against imaginary reproaches which they addressed to him because he had not prevented them from making a mistake in the choice of their husbands (352 - 53).

At the end of his life, rejected by the children to whom he thought he had dedicated his life, Elliot is as unadjusted to reality as Len Sterner.

Until his death, Elliot nevertheless clings to his initial vision of fulfilling himself through a patriarchy. The ending of *Our Daily Bread* puts in question Grove's statement in *It Needs to Be Said* that the loser in the generation conflict is vitally weaker (125). None of the children is "vitally stronger" than John Elliot, yet he is the one who is destroyed in the conflict. This contradiction shows very clearly that the term "vitally stronger" needs qualification. In a Nietzschean reading of *Our Daily Bread*, the decisive criterion for success is the strength of the will to power. Elliot's children eventually win out even though their father is stronger in agricultural knowledge and economic power. They are determined to establish their lives without their father's interference, whereas Elliot's will to force his children into his vision is moderated and counteracted by his desire to protect them from harm. His willingness to help them, especially in financial matters, works against his own determination by supporting their independence.

Traditional humanistic analyses of *Our Daily Bread*, attribute the outcome of the novel to Elliot's selfishness:

> Blindness towards his wife and children as persons was Eliot's [*sic*] unforgivable sin, and the Lear-like desolation of his final days is the only possible result of such ignoring of all humanistic values (McKenna, 111).

This interpretation identifies a strong contradiction in Elliot's character. He expects his children to be satisfied with the material achievements of his agricultural patriarchy, yet he needs his wife's emotional support:

> Was it possible that he might have to live on one day without ever being able to look forward to that touch and the currents flowing from it, through him and her? That touch which held power to free him of all uncertainties? (13).

Yet Elliot denies his children the emotional fulfilment which is an important element of his own being. Since he considers his children primarily as elements in his self-fulfilment, he sacrifices their emotions to his will to power. From this point of view, Elliot is clearly responsible for the failure of his life. Had he learned to accept his children's wills to self-determination, he might have made it possible for them to follow in his ways and to live comfortable and meaningful lives instead of the desolate lives that result from their will to independence.[10] However, this interpretation overlooks a strong element in the novel. John Elliot's vision fails, but Grove also portrays Elliot as a victim of his children almost as much as of his vision. Elliot is, after all, the experienced and successful farmer who wants to help his children attain the same material success. Through his negative portrait of Elliot's children Grove distributes the blame between father and children and even shows more sympathy for Elliot's patriarchal ambitions than for the children's longing for independence.

Elliot's perception of his children as means to fulfill his ambitions is not unique in Grove's oeuvre. The narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* exhibits a very similar attitude toward his daughter:

> Ever since the little girl was born, there had been only one desire which filled my life. Where I had failed, she was to succeed. Where I had squandered my energies and opportunities, she was to use them to some purpose. What I might have done but had not done, she was to do. She was to redeem me. . . . Deprived of her, I myself came to a definite and peremptory end. With her to continue my life, there was still some purpose in things, some justification for existence (117 - 18).

Like Elliot's, the narrator's attitude far exceeds "normal" caring for the well-being of his child. The narrator's daughter seems to exist primarily to fulfill a role in her father's life

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[10]The best example of the children's ingratitude and inability to manage their affairs is their handling of John Elliot's will. In spite of his disappointment' Elliot writes a will that is very favorable to his children. But Norman finds a way to violate his father's instructions and get the money before its time, even though this transaction causes him a great financial loss. This loss and the fact that Norman wastes the money verify Isabel's verdict about her father, "He is not going to have his own will" (373), in more than one sense.

rather than to develop into a strong individual.[11] In fact, all fathers in Grove's oeuvre dominate their children's lives, regarding the children as extensions of themselves.

Grove's narrative strategy stresses Elliot's self-centered view of his family since the novel focusses on the father and presents almost exclusively his point of view. None of the ten children is well developed as a character; Margaret, Henry, and Arthur are little more than names. In Grove's novel, as in Elliot's perception, the children are little more than "puppets" (Skelton, 157), designed to be directed by a master's will and not to develop any initiative of their own.

Grove's portrayal of the generation conflict as a conflict of wills to power in *Our Daily Bread* remains ambivalent. While he clearly criticizes Elliot's disregard of his children's individualities and emphasizes the suffering and frustration Elliot's will causes, he stresses the positive elements of Elliot's values. The novel portrays the younger generation as incapable of living meaningful lives by showing how the children blindly misuse their freedom. The question arises whether resisting their father's plans had really been to their advantage. Grove does not answer this question. His configuration of characters makes an answer impossible: the positions of John Elliot and his children are irreconcilable; yet a compromise would be the only means of solving the conflict without creating a humiliated loser. Grove indirectly implies that moderating their wills to power might enable the protagonists to avoid or overcome their conflicts. However, *Our Daily Bread* does not indicate whether or how the characters could achieve a compromise. Some protagonists of Grove's later novels do manage to overcome these conflicts created by the will to patriarchal power.

Grove takes up the topics of patriarchy and generation conflict again in *Fruits of the Earth* and for the first time presents, although in rudimentary form, a positive alternative to the approach to life that characterizes the protagonists of his previous novels. The most important topics of *Fruits of the Earth* are the conflict of man versus the land, the problem of establishing satisfying relationships within the family, and the political organization of society. Dealing with all of these topics in a novel of 260 pages,

[11]This strong fixation upon his daughter's potential as a means to give meaning to his life is not just a trait of the persona, but it is a trait of Grove himself. This becomes evident from his exclamation, "And then I suddenly think of little May - - - / And if I could, I'd annihilate this world," in a letter to his wife (98).

Grove does not achieve very much depth in the treatment of any of them. But his attempt to do justice to the complexity of his characters' experience demonstrates his increasing awareness of the multitude of factors that shape human lives.[12]

In the first half of *Fruits of the Earth*, Grove creates a story that has many parallels with *Our Daily Bread*. Abe Spalding, "a man of economic vision" and "possessed by 'land hunger'" (17), decides to build his farm on the prairie in order to realize his patriarchal ambitions. He thus exhibits the same motivations as John Elliot, but Abe's most important character traits, particularly his will to dominate his whole environment and his unbending will to persevere, echo Nietzschean ideas even more strongly.

Grove establishes very early that Abe Spalding sees his self-realization only in material terms. Even before coming to Manitoba, Abe had rejected the "world of the spirit" (19) and "had deliberately chosen the material world for the arena of his struggles" (18). Therefore, and in accordance with Nietzschean logic, Abe strives to gain as much power as possible over his material circumstances:

> He would conquer this wilderness; he would change it; he would set his own seal upon it! . . . He wanted land, not landscape; all the landscape he cared for he would introduce himself. Yet, half unbeknown to him, there was a dream: of a mansion such as he had seen in Ontario, in the remnants of a colonial estate – a mansion dominating an extensive holding of land, imposed upon that holding as a sort of seigneurial sign-manual. . . . He would change this prairie, would impose himself upon it, would conquer its spirit! (22 – 23).

Abe sees the land and, by extension, the whole world, as a tool to help him realize himself. Whatever does not contribute to his self-realization does not enter his consideration. Early in the novel, Abe's ambition is presented without evaluation; it appears only as an extremely ambitious vision of domination. The narrative shows the destructive consequences, for Abe and his family, of Abe's attitude.

Abe's strong will to power over nature constitutes a significant difference between Abe Spalding and John Elliot. For Elliot, gaining power over his life does not include a conflict with nature; his material ambition is moderate enough not to go beyond the limits set by the forces of nature. Abe, however, is willing to accept no power other than his

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[12]Grove was to attempt a more comprehensive portrait of the forces that shape a district in the unpublished manuscript "The Seasons." The sheer bulk of the 1,000-page unfinished draft demonstrates Grove's difficulty in realizing his project. See Nesbitt, "The Seasons: Grove's Unfinished Novel."

own. He is thus a considerably more Nietzschean character than Elliot.

Abe's attitude toward his physical environment provides him with an ideological basis for striving for the highest degree of freedom and independence possible on the material level. He wants to use his farm to shape the "virgin prairie" (24) and thus create its character. Through his "single-minded perseverance and . . . profound ambition to prevail over the obstacles of natural process and his own humanity" (Moss, *Patterns*, 205), and through his capacity for farming, he is eventually able to build his grand farmhouse. However, his success exacts a toll which he does not understand until it is almost too late.

Grove stresses that Abe's pursuit of power results in a stark dehumanization which undermines even his relationship with the people closest to him:

> His material struggle absorbed him to the point where he had no energy left to ponder nice questions of conduct and to lay down rules to govern his intercourse with wife and children. When, in a flash of insight, this became clear to him, he postponed the difficulty. The 'kids' were still small; he would take them in hand later; let him build up that farm first, an empire ever growing in his plans (45).

Abe realizes that his ambition ignores central aspects of life he wants to satisfy, but his will to domination is so strong that he does not change his behavior. He firmly believes that he can arrange all affairs to satisfy his desires:

> He knew he was neglecting a thing of fundamental importance. . . . He began to have glimpses of the truth that his dream of economic success involved another dream: that of a family life on the great estate which he was building up (50).

Although Abe has "moments of an almost poignant realization of 'the futility of it all'" (50), his will to power through material domination forces him to suppress such doubts.

Abe's decision to utilize all possible means for his self-fulfilment sets in motion a mechanism that imposes its own laws.

> What was the solution? There was only one: power-farming as it was called: machinery would do the work of many horses and many men. But Abe liked the response of living flesh and bone to the spoken word and hated the unintelligent repetition of ununderstood activities which machines demanded. Yet sooner or later he must come to that; he would have to run the farm like a

factory (41).

Abe is willing to take this step. However, by accepting machinery he surrenders his power to the mechanical process. He becomes a successful farmer and eventually builds his big mansion, but this triumph is not so much his own as that of the machinery of which he has become a part: at the "proudest moment of his life . . . he raised an arm as though reaching for the stars" (119), but this very instant shows how removed Abe is from what he perceives as his achievement.

With the completion of the grand farmhouse Abe has contributed as much as he can to realizing his vision of mastery over the land. He has established his farm as the "seigneurial sign-manual" (23), and he has established himself as "Sir Abe of Spalding Hall" (63), the master of the district. Yet Abe's self-realization, like Elliot's, requires also the satisfaction of his emotional needs and the perpetuation of his success into the future. But the dehumanizing effect of Abe's quest for power destroys the very family life integral to his vision (50). When the material prerequisites for the family life exist as Abe had wanted them, they have become meaningless. Ruth is alienated from her husband, and Abe barely has any contact with his children. For Charlie, his eldest son and the logical successor in a patriarchal order, Abe is "almost a stranger" (91).

The failure of Abe's material success to bring him fulfilment clearly casts doubts on the Nietzschean belief in power as the measure of all achievement. Abe's human desire for a family life is irreconcilable with the ideal of power that his will pursues.

Abe Spalding's career as farmer, husband, and father shows emphatically the destructive effects of Nietzschean values on the human being longing for a fulfilled life. Harrison argues that

> the besetting danger in Grove's fictional world is that the settler will fail to maintain spiritual contact with external nature and eventually with his own intuitive nature. He will become not savage but dehumanized ("Rolvaag, Grove," 261).

Abe Spalding's mental state before Charlie's death illustrates this consequence. However, Abe's dehumanization results not from his missing spiritual contact with external nature but from his will actively to oppose that nature. As I discussed in chapter four, Grove describes prairie nature as hostile to human ambitions and shows that anyone who wants to establish himself physically on the prairie has to accepts limits to his material self-realization or fight the forces of nature. Abe Spalding's fate demonstrates that a

farmer pays for his victory by a gradual loss of human characteristics. However, this development results not only from fighting prairie nature. According to Nietzsche, every attempt to establish one's will eventually comes in conflict with other centers of power, ranging from the conscious will of another person to the impact of natural forces. For a character such as Abe Spalding, who possesses an extreme will to self-realization, surrender to those centers of power – in this case, the land – is equivalent to a surrender of the self. Abe's persistence in his fight for self-realization is thus positive from a Nietzschean point of view, but the suffering and frustration caused by Abe's unwillingness to adjust his will to accommodate the facts of reality make his attitude an extremely questionable model.

Grove uses the character of Charlie Spalding to alter Abe's self-imagé. Most importantly, through the time he spends with his son Abe learns the un-Nietzschean lesson that other human beings are essential for his personal happiness. Charlie seems to provide for Abe that recreation of himself that John Elliot had expected his children to be: "The boy was himself re-arisen; finer, slenderer, more delicate, more exquisitely tempered" (93).[13] His recognition of his son makes Abe aware of the fact that his farm is not the only legacy he will leave to the world. It also teaches him that the material success of his farm had satisfied only one aspect of his self. Charlie enables Abe to rediscover his emotional side which he had neglected and nearly obliterated. Grove thus develops Abe a step further than John Elliot whose longing for such emotional ties to his children existed only on an inarticulate, temporary, and barely noticeable level. Abe's desire for the satisfaction of his emotions, in short, his passions, emerges not as an obstacle to self-fulfilment but rather, in opposition to Nietzsche's view of passions, as a significant contribution to true happiness.

Grove is in danger of turning Charlie into a *deus ex machina* who weakens the credibility of Abe's emotional education. Charlie's death serves two functions: it emphasizes the destructive consequences of Abe's pursuit of material power, and it triggers Abe's self-analysis and revaluation of his life which is the theme of the

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[13]It is pointless to ask whether Charlie would ever have been able to take over Abe's role. The eleven-year-old boy is certainly incapable of it. However, he would have had time to grow into Abe's position under his father's guidance, and the role of administering the farm operations would have required quite a different character from the one necessary to build the system. The contrast in the personalities of Abe and Charlie Spalding anticipates that of Rudyard and Sam Clark in *The Master of the Mill.*

remainder of the novel.

Abe is responsible for Charlie's death by giving him a task clearly beyond his abilities. If Abe had not neglected his family in trying to master his environment, he would have been able to judge his son's abilities correctly and thus saved his life. Grove points out that the task which causes Charlie's death is not necessary to build or even keep the farm, but only to increase Abe's profit. Abe's rationale for letting Charlie drive the team - "They had just been able to keep pace with the machine; now they would have to thresh on the ground. . . . Part of the grain was sure to spoil" (124) - demonstrates that Charlie is the victim of the mechanism, created by Abe, which finds its expression in the farm machinery. Having Charlie physically crushed by the products of the farm aptly illustrates this process and its human consequences.

When Abe tries to plan the future of his farm, he repeats John Elliot's experience that the transfer of achievement from one generation to the next is impossible; Jim declares, "If I cared for a farm, I'd take up a homestead myself, to build a place of my own" (222). Realizing that he had had the same feeling as a young man, Abe understands that he has pursued an impossible dream. His aimlessness after the completion of his farm and his observation that "the moment a work of man was finished, nature set to work to take it down again" (134), illustrate Grove's claim that "an ideal realized would be an ideal destroyed. . . . The aim, the ideal, to be of value as a guide, must be unattainable" (*It Needs*, 88).

We can take Abe's observation a step further and see that his individual failure illustrates the basic flaw of his approach to life. Having followed only the dictates of his will to power and thus having attempted to realize himself in a purely materialistic ideal, Abe is eventually caught in a situation in which "the thing done is nothing: the doing everything" (132). In a final consequence, this approach to life leads to the vicious circle that Niels Lindstedt contemplates as an escape from his suffering: "to leave and to go to the very margin of civilization, there to clear a new place; and [later] . . . to move on once more, again to the very edge of pioneerdom, and to start it all over anew" (119). An ideal which creates such a meaningless life is highly questionable. Yet this is the ideal that derives from Abe's will to power. Caught up in his vision, Abe had been unable to see these consequences, but the mature and more human Abe can, like the reader, understand the dangers of such an approach to life.

Abe's growing awareness of what his actions mean for the people around him and of his responsibilities toward them indicates that the individualist will to power is not, as Nietzsche had suggested, the key to happiness:

> He was changing his aim; that aim was now to live on, not in a material sense, through his economic achievement, but in what he did for district and municipality. . . . As far as his economic ambitions went, he had reached his goal. He might go on making money; what for? Material aspirations meant nothing (138 – 39).

He has realized the error of his original position, but he has not yet learned to accept that other people's points of view are equivalent to his own. Consequently he fails in his attempts to guide the political affairs of the district into the direction he considers best.[14] He treats the district as if he can manipulate it. The ensuing conflicts of wills alienate Abe completely from everyone around him. Even though he intends to do what is best, his self-centeredness and self-righteousness prevent him from communicating. Marion's rejection of her father's opinion of her marriage and the decision of the district to reject Abe's political guidance demonstrate on different levels that Abe himself has obstructed the realization of his desires. Abe's failure derives from an attitude which makes him consider himself – in true Nietzschean manner – the most important center of power. This attitude finds expression in his grand house: "No matter what might happen in the outer world, this farm was a world in itself which would endure while he lasted, defying the forces of nature" (204). Abe gradually realizes that his material achievement is only temporary (134) and that in the long run the price of his achievement outweighs his success:

> A great task was ahead of him: the task of making clear to himself what his life had been worth to him; and this necessity filled him with a passionate longing for peace and moral support within his own house. No matter what he had said in the past, his isolation in the district weighed heavily on him. Since that August day when Harrison had interviewed him, he had seemed isolated even in his house (200).

This change of Abe's outlook is very significant. His main concern is no longer the increase of his material power – the farm has become "a possession of no value now, a

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[14] I will consider Abe's involvement in politics at greater length in the next chapter.

mere ostentation" (230) – but rather the satisfaction of his emotional needs. This change, a clear departure from the Nietzschean standards that had dominated Abe's character during most of the novel, enables him to find peace with himself.

Grove expresses Abe's rejection of an approach to life that emphasizes the power of the self by making him concentrate on the pleasures of working and by having him consider an adjustment of his ambitions to factual reality:

> Abe could not remember the time when he had worked in such utter peace. Last night resignation had come to him. In no other way could he find happiness: a life in the present, looking neither backward nor forward. . . . Abe planned retrenchments: . . . rebuild life on a smaller scale; do things in a leisurely way; enjoy the doing of them; taste every season, every hour, every task to the full! Had he done so years ago, he would have saved much of life (241).

Abe is thus ready to reconcile his original ambitions with reality. Rather than imposing his will on his environment, he is now willing to accept limitations. Grove asserts that Abe's redefinition of his ambitions has positive psychological consequences. Comparing Abe's newly found peace of mind to his earlier discontent, the novel emphasizes the shortcomings of an approach to life which ignores that emotional satisfaction is an integral element of happiness. In the course of the novel, the reader moves from admiring the material feats made possible by Abe's approach to life – which embodies, as we have seen, numerous Nietzschean attitudes – to a critique and eventual condemnation of this attitude.

The most obvious sign of Abe's changed philosophy is his decision to abandon farming machinery – the means to material domination – and to return to the original way of farming which satisfies him emotionally: "Abe liked the response of living flesh and bone and hated the unintelligent repetition of ununderstood activities which machines demanded" (41). Gradually Abe becomes capable of accepting a relationship to his environment which contains limitations and not only opportunities for self-realization. Abe comes to this understanding earlier when reflecting upon life after Charlie's death but is not prepared to act upon his conclusions:

> He . . . had considered the prairie only as a page to write the story of his life upon. His vision had been bounded by the lines of his farm; his farm had been floated on that prairie as the shipwright floats a vessel on the sea, looking not

> so much at the waves which are to batter it as at the fittings which secure the comfort of those within. But such a vessel may be engulfed by such a sea (138).

He becomes capable of action only when his previous mode of life has proven completely invalid. The most important consequence of the "retrenching" is Abe's redefinition of his relationship to his environment, particularly to the people around him. "Rebuild[ing] his life on a smaller scale" (241) also includes rethinking his behavior toward others. Gradually, he becomes capable of acknowledging other people's interests. Eventually, Abe accepts other people as equivalent to himself.

This development becomes most evident in Ruth Spalding's role in the narrative. Early in the novel, Grove poignantly characterizes Abe's relationship to his wife: "Abe was thinking of his coming negotiations with Hall; Ruth – of what?" (32). Concentrating so exclusively upon his power prevents Abe from acknowledging his wife's wishes: "To the land and its demands Ruth must be sacrificed" (Thomas, 51). Consequently, Abe believes that her only task is to take care of children and household. Since the novel almost exclusively uses Abe's point of view, she appears only as a marginal character. Ruth can have a place in the narrative and can appear capable of independent and significant action only when Abe has altered his perception of himself and his importance. By turning the narrative attention to Ruth in the crisis over Frances, Grove asserts that her perspective is as significant as Abe's. The narrative thus approaches a perspectivism which pays due attention to every character. Grove was to extend this process in his later novels.

Grove had considerable difficulties in making Ruth credible as an active character because during two thirds of the novel she is a marginal figure, chacterized primarily by inertia. Like Abe, the reader is not prepared to see her suddenly take charge of affairs in a situation where Abe is helpless.[15] Her ability to handle the problems generated by Frances' seduction and to see her own limits demonstrates that she copes better with the world as it is than does Abe who lives in the world as if it were the way he wanted it to be.

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[15]Grove originally planned to have Abe die in a violent act of revenge (cf. Spettigue, *Grove*, 114 – 15). Such a fate might have been appropriate for the earlier Abe, but not for the one who has seriously reflected on his place in the world.

At the end of *Fruits of the Earth*, Grove has thus overcome the narrative concentration upon one character which, as Blodgett argues, makes an understanding of the other characters very difficult:

> Frederick Philip Grove . . . prefers an omniscient narrator for his specifically Prairie novels. It is a point of view that emphasizes the father, the necessary hero of the settlement process. The father made so central, however, prevents the other members of the family from having other than stereotypical roles (wife and mother) or roles not yet defined (particularly true of daughters) (89).

Abandoning the exclusive focus on the "hero" allows Grove to make the reader aware of the relative value of all powers.

Grove's portrait of Abe Spalding thus departs considerably from that of John Elliot as whose double it had begun. This difference becomes particularly evident when Abe feels compelled to take action against the people who threaten to corrupt the morals of the district. Although Frances' troubles prompt Abe to act, he is motivated by his newly-found awareness of his responsibilities for others and thus unselfishness:

> The district was calling. There, too, he had started a machinery which he could not stop and which imposed its law upon him. But suddenly he felt that, if he followed its call, that district would rally about him. . . . True resignation meant accepting one's destiny; to him, it meant accepting the burden of leadership. . . . His own life had been wrong, or all this would not have happened. He had lived to himself and had had to learn that it could not be done. . . (263 - 64).

The last sentence of the quotation underscores the non-Nietzschean character of the values proposed in *Fruits of the Earth*. Living to and for oneself is, after all, one of the means to gain fullest control over one's life that Nietzsche had suggested (cf. *Zarathustra*, 78 - 81, 90 - 91). Grove condemns the extreme practice of this approach, in the hermit episode of *A Search for America*; here he indicates through Abe's acceptance of his responsibilities as a social being the questionable value of any form of self-centeredness.

Having rejected his superhuman ambition of total control, Abe finally overcomes the dichotomy that Harrison identifies as the root of his difficulties: "Abe's spiritual powers are set in opposition . . . to his conscious will and rational intelligence" ("Rolvaag, Grove," 256). Only when Abe unites these two opposites - which we can read through Nietzsche as the agents of passions and will to power respectively - can Abe hope for a

satisfying life. This conclusion contradicts Nietzsche's position that the only goal in life truly worth striving for is an absolute self-control which renders other human beings essentially superfluous.

The novel's open end suggests, however, that Abe has not completed revaluating his values. Although he seems ready in theory to deal with the people around him on a basis of equality, his authoritarian manner in the old schoolhouse and the fact the the settlers approve of Abe's act – hinted at in the last sentence of the novel – leave open the possibility that Abe might resort to his old ways. *Fruits of the Earth* shows the positive value of the first steps of that moderate attitude which is an essential element of functioning social relationships, but the novel does not contain a fully developed model which the reader might consider a positive alternative to Abe's focus on power which, after all, brings Abe a certain measure of success until the very end of the novel.

Two Generations, published six years after *Fruits of the Earth*, demonstrates continued interest in the power structure of the patriarchy and in the domineering self. Grove's third novel about agricultural patriarchs shows considerable similarities to *Our Daily Bread*. Both John Elliot and Ralph Patterson are successful and affluent farmers. Patterson is, in fact, so prosperous that he keeps "a fourteen-roomed house going with the help of two servants" (220) and has developed from a farmer into an agricultural manager whose work no longer requires all his time and who can ideally use his energies for other purposes. His main problem appears to be that "above all he wanted a task" (174). Patterson's problem, like Elliot's, is that at heart he is a pioneer who can no longer realize himself through pioneering:

> He had had queer thoughts, of late. He was superseded. He had no right to hold on to the farm, to a mere ownership, when he was no longer doing any part of the work, not even as a manager; for George had shown that he was a better manager than he, Ralph, could now be. He had grown out of things, on the farm. . . .
>
> What could he do instead? At forty-six, go to Mexico for a trip? Go around the world? Why not? Dominate the town instead? Make the town pay tribute to him? If only there were not that distaste with which he looked on commercial activities! (145 – 46).

Patterson's self-questioning demonstrates that his achievement is a source of

dissatisfaction and not, as Nietzschean thought leads one to expect, a reward for past, and incentive for further, striving. His fate thus contradicts Nietzsche whose logic of effort and satisfaction ignores the emotional effects of such achievements.

Patterson increasingly turns to his family, hoping to shape his children's lives in accordance with his own plans. Like John Elliot and Abe Spalding, Ralph Patterson had neglected his family while he was concerned with his other means of self-expression, but now that he requires his children, he expects them to be at his call.

> The point just now was that he wanted 'the kid' to be there. He had never bothered about his older children; but then, when they had been little, he had been busy. . . . Nor did he 'look after' Tom – for Mary, being a girl, did not count anyway; but he felt as though he missed something whenever the boy was out of sight. . . (16).

Patterson's neglect of his family does not, however, stem from lack of interest. He always has very definite ideas about the lives he wants them to live and does whatever he can to influence their development: "The boys? They'd be all right. He considered that he had done the best he could for them. He had held them down to the soil" (19). He feels perfectly justified in his authoritarian behavior since to him "his children were, in a manner of speaking, part of himself" (93). Like John Elliot, Patterson acknowledges neither his children's individuality nor their separate wills. He is not motivated by malice or spite; he is the victim of an incomplete understanding of his relationship to others. He is a less radical egotist than Abe Spalding, but he undergoes the same lesson.

This domineering attitude increasingly alienates Patterson from his family. Even at the outset of the novel, when, at least superficially, everything is still in order, Patterson is aware that "somehow these boys stuck together. Between him and them there was a gulf" (19). Alice expresses the extent to which the children feel oppressed by their father's will when she calls him "autocrat" and "dictator," when she comments, "That sounds as if you considered us some sort of live stock" (65), and when she complains, "He does not want us to gain our own experience. He wants to be God Almighty to us" (115). Her charge is true, but Patterson is not aware that his patronizing attitude blocks his children's will to self-realization. Phil's desire to become an astronomer partially because "it has no immediate practical value" (79) combines his will to self-realization with his desire to oppose his father's will and values. Like John Elliot, Ralph Patterson wants what he thinks is best for his children but cannot accept that

their points of view are different from his. Eventually, after the collapse of his relationship with his wife and his children, Ralph Patterson is in a situation very similar to those that John Elliot and Abe Spalding experience at the nadir of their careers:

> His confidence was profoundly shaken; and he realized it; only she could restore it. Four of his children had left the parental house, all of them to go their own ways. Even Henry, even George. It had always been a struggle; and in each struggle he had been defeated. Two, Alice and Phil, had left against his veto; and their mother had backed them. And now this financial disaster! . . . He wished her to suggest his next step; for he could not see his own way. He wished her to do so, not a week from now; not tomorrow, but this minute! Else what was the use of living on? (250 – 51).

At this point, "Patterson is a younger John Elliot; he is Abe Spalding's double" (Stobie, *Grove*, 168).

Yet in spite of these parallels it is misleading to consider the novel "an Ontario version of *Our Daily Bread*" (Spettigue, *Grove*, 115). Grove includes in *Two Generations* a number of features which make the novel quite different from *Our Daily Bread* and which alone make possible the ending which reverses that of the earlier novel.

The most important difference between *Two Generations* and Grove's previous novels is in the roles of the other family members. Grove characterizes Di Patterson much more fully than Martha Elliot or Ruth Spalding; he also makes her much stronger than them. From the outset of the novel, she is as significant a character as Ruth is at the end of *Fruits of the Earth*, and Grove develops her role even further so that it balances her husband's. Her strong voice throughout the novel clearly shows Grove's increased attention to individual perspectives. Martha Elliot is her husband's emotional support and Ruth Spalding is little more than Abe's housekeeper, but Di Patterson has a definite influence upon her husband:

> He would have said he loved her; but he stood a little in awe of her. She was a good wife; she was an excellent mother; but somehow, even now, he had a suspicion that she was 'managing' him; that, in a mysterious way, she was having her will against his wishes by means of her own (16).

Mrs. Patterson also has another kind of power that had been denied the wives in the earlier novels since she is materially independent from her husband. Even though Grove does not express her point of view as fully as her husband's, he makes her Ralph

Patterson's equal in terms of material power, the kind of power her husband understands best and responds to most easily. Thus she is able to put direct economic pressure upon him (190 - 92) and make him accept her as a power to be reckoned with. This is impossible for Martha Elliot or Ruth Spalding who can only appeal to their husbands' emotions.

The children, too, have different roles in *Two Generations* than in any of the previous novels. The younger members of the Elliot and Spalding families exist almost exclusively as elements of their fathers' lives but have little or no identity of their own. In *Two Generations*, however, "they are as substantial and individualized as the main protagonist" (Moss, *Patterns*, 204). They are, as the novel's title indicates, as important for the developments in the narrative as their father.

Two Generations establishes a relationship between narrator and author different from the one in Grove's previous novels. In *Our Daily Bread* and most of *Fruits of the Earth* the narrative focusses on the protagonist, presenting the other characters only in relation to him. In *Two Generations*, however, Grove partially abandons this method and works toward the perspectivism that according to Nietzsche results from all human interaction (*Will* 2: 121). In several chapters, Ralph Patterson appears only in references, and throughout the novel the children, particularly Phil and Alice, have ample room to present their opinions. Their positions are radically different from their father's; occasionally their pronouncements even border on the absurd - such as Alice's exclamation, "We're an outspoken generation. We are smashing taboos. We're iconoclasts, breakers of images. . . . We are rebels; we are scavengers; we want to clear away the rubbish of the ages" (186) - but the narrator does not condemn them as he would have done in *Our Daily Bread* and *Fruits of the Earth*.

Grove's altered narrative approach becomes evident also from the fact that Grove can be associated with several points of view in the novel. In *Our Daily Bread* and *Fruits of the Earth* the narrative emphasis on the central characters excludes other other points of view.[16] In *Two Generations*, however, Grove can be associated with several characters.

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[16]In *Our Daily Bread* Grove creates Woodrow Ormond as a portrait of the man he himself would have liked to be. Not only is the novel based partially on his wife's family (c.f. Stobie, *Grove*, 27), but Ormond's views are also so similar to the ones Grove expressed elsewhere that we can identify him as a self-portrait. Ormond's views are, however, so similar to Elliot's that he does not add another angle to the narrative.

Naming one of the sons Phil automatically invites the reader to associate the character's point of view with the author's – Grove uses this method in *A Search for America* – and the portrait of Phil as an intelligent and ambitious person further supports this reading. Phil also expresses those agrarian values which Grove himself promoted:

> A farmer is a man who induces nature to yield him a living and perhaps a little more. But you can't force nature to do as you wish; you can't arrest those clouds. . . . But the great farmer. . . takes nature as he finds it and fits himself in. . . . The man who tries to farm in the teeth of nature is a fool, nothing less (41 – 43).

Phil clearly restates John Elliot's saying "you can't fool the land." By inviting the reader to associate the author's position with the younger generation instead of the patriarch, Grove contradicts his earlier exclusive emphasis on the father's power. Presenting the conflicts in the novel from perspectives as different as those of Ralph and Phil Patterson, Grove's fictional technique approaches a representation of the perspectivism which Nietzsche describes as an element of all interaction (c.f. *Will*, 2: 120).

Another significant difference between *Two Generations* and the previous novels is the extent to which events in the outside world shape the fortunes of the patriarch. Nietzsche's vision of self-realization requires a person to exist in complete independence from external influences. Niels Lindstedt lives in almost complete seclusion, but the three novels discussed in this chapter increasingly show human beings existing in a complex network of forces. John Elliot lives largely apart from the outside world. He can still speak out against "meddling in the European war" (236) and ignore the flax boom, but his children, who live in the city or get directly involved in the war, are touched by that outside world much more strongly. The debate about consolidation as well as Frances Spalding's fate and its repercussions on her father involve Abe more extensively in external events than John Elliot, yet he can, at least theoretically, still withdraw into the isolation of his farm. The members of the Patterson family, finally, are inextricably linked to the outside world. This becomes obvious not only through the existence of Sleepy Hollow as an alternative to the father's farm, but also through Phil's option of going to university and Nancy's career as a dancer in New York – although her escape is difficult to believe. The fact that the Depression almost destroys the economic basis of Ralph Patterson's life illustrates that complete independence is impossible. Since such independence is, however, a basic prerequisite for complete self-realization, this goal is

also impossible to reach.

Ralph Patterson certainly would like to be another John Elliot, and in some aspects he is the most tyrannical of the three patriarchs. Neither John Elliot nor Abe Spalding can be imagined attacking their sons as Patterson attacks Phil (194). Being a worse tyrant than Elliot or Spalding, Patterson fails more drastically than they do: everybody turns away from him, even his wife; his farm, which had given meaning to his life, now belongs to his son; and the business enterprises with which he tries to find a new means of self-realization endanger his economic security. Abe Spalding still owns his farm and has his wife to turn to, and John Elliot is so convinced of being right that he never becomes aware of the full extent of his failure. Ralph Patterson, however, is aware that the causes of his failure rest with him more than with anyone else. Grove thus lets him experience the full extent of the *human* misery that results from an uncompromising pursuit of personal power and from ignoring the interests of others.

In contrast to his treatment of the earlier protagonists, Grove lets Ralph Patterson finally achieve what John Elliot and Abe Spalding could only hope for. While Elliot clings to his conviction of being right and Spalding is for a long time content with a self-centered life in isolation, Ralph Patterson realizes that his needs are different: "He could not hoe his garden for exercise and, of an evening, sit on his porch to see life flowing by along the highway" (251). Patterson realizes that to bring about the family life he desires and to give meaning to his life, he has to change his view of himself in relation to others. We may object to chapter XLV as an overly quick happy ending, but it merely accelerates the inevitable. Patterson finally develops an attitude which allows him to find reconciliation with his family and emotional fulfilment: "Here was a tyrant speaking to his slaves as equals" (257). Patterson's gradual reconciliation with Phil, the most important element of his attempt "to start over" (261), is possible only through his recognition of his son's right to self-fulfilment.

Grove referred to the outcome of *Two Generations* as a "happy ending," but immediately qualified this evaluation with the comment, "or at least so it will appear to a vast majority of readers" (*Letters*, 337). This qualification suggests that Grove was not convinced that such an outcome is as desirable as it appears. The lesson underlying the ending of *Two Generations* carries within itself the danger that a person might deny his or her will to power altogether and thus exclude from his or her life not only the negative but also the positive consequences of a pursuit of the will to power.

Ralph Patterson's decision to accept things as they are and to live more or less in peace with his environment is positive from a humanistic point of view, but from a Nietzschean position, Patterson betrays his potential. No longer trying to shape reality in accordance with his own interests means that he forgoes his chances for a self-determined existence. From a humanistic perspective, Ralph Patterson has made his peace with the world; from Nietzsche's, he has surrendered to it. Tone and outlook of the ending suggest rather strongly, however, that through his change of attitude toward his children Ralph Patterson has gained much more than he has lost.

The balance between will to power over the self and will to human fulfilment still eludes Grove. By now he has his characters sacrifice the will to power rather than emotional satisfaction, but this is a very uneasy conclusion which persists throughout Grove's writing.

VII. Possibilities of Social Power

In the novels we have considered so far, Grove was concerned almost exclusively with individual characters and their quest for personal happiness and self-fulfilment. Society seems almost non-existent in novels such as *Settlers of the Marsh* and *Our Daily Bread*. Events in the world beyond the boundaries of Ralph Patterson's farm have a significant effect on the characters in *Two Generations*, but the novel still focusses on the developments in the Patterson family.

Fruits of the Earth and *The Master of the Mill* are the only ones of Grove's novels in which the protagonists are actively involved in social affairs. Abe Spalding becomes drawn into district politics; Sam and Edmund Clark even become involved in national politics, and they are fully aware that they have significant power over the lives of their countrymen. Since the Clarks' personal quests are less significant than the social consequences of those quests, *The Master of the Mill* is essentially a social novel. Therefore Nietzschean ideas, which focus so strongly on personal and interpersonal affairs, should have no part in the novel. However, Grove's depiction of social interaction shares many features with Nietzschean perceptions of power relationships. In fact, Edmund Clark emerges as Grove's most Nietzschean protagonist, embodying the Nietzschean fixation on power as well as the belief in a hierarchical social structure defined by the elite.

While Grove's social focus distinguishes *Fruits of the Earth* and *The Master of the Mill* from his other novels, his approach to plots and characters is very similar to his earlier practice. A consideration of Nietzschean echoes in Grove's portraits of social and political relationships illuminates his social vision in *Fruits of the Earth* and *The Master of the Mill*. *Fruits of the Earth* criticizes, in Nietzschean terms, democratic equality and the ignorance of the common people; *The Master of the Mill* depicts social and political interaction as an interplay of power centers, clearly echoing Nietzsche's concept that life is an ongoing power struggle (cf. *Zarathustra*, 137 - 138). Grove's serious consideration of social interaction shows that he attaches more significance to this topic than did Nietzsche, for whom political considerations were ephemera.

A brief glance at Nietzsche's statements about politics shows that Nietzsche debated politics in the same terms of power which characterize his views of interpersonal relationships. Raymond Polin has summarized the reasons for Nietzsche's sketchy view of politics:

> Political problems have never been the object of systematic considerations on Nietzsche's part. He basically touched upon them only to that degree to which political problems were integral parts of that culture and civilization which forms the true object of his philosophy.[1]

Nietzsche's philosophy is oriented almost exclusively toward the individual and his chances for self-fulfilment, which is of necessity private. Political and social considerations are aspects of communal existence, and are thus, as Polin argues, insignificant for Nietzsche:

> Nietzsche's solitary man transcends all community and realizes himself beyond and outside of all social connections. It is, however, also possible to say that he exists *before* all community."[2]

Despite these restrictions, it is possible to derive Nietzsche's basic views on political organization from his pronouncements on related subjects, most notably the concept of the "higher type."

The core of Nietzsche's perception of the relationship between individual and state appears in two poignant statements:

> It is the task of history . . . to inspire and lend the strength for the production of the great man. . . . The *goal of humanity* cannot lie in its end but only *in its highest exemplars (Meditations*, 111).[3]

> The essential characteristic of a good and healthy aristocracy, however, is that it experiences itself *not* as a function (whether of the monarchy or the commonwealth) but as their *meaning* and highest justification. . . . Their fundamental faith simply has to be that society must *not* exist for society's sake but only as the foundation and scaffolding on which a choice type of being is able to raise itself to its higher task and to a higher state of *being* (*Beyond*,

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[1] "Politische Probleme waren fuer Nietzsche niemals Gegenstand systematischer Ueberlegungen. Nur in dem Masse, in dem politische Probleme integrierende Bestandteile jener Kultur und Zivilisation sind, die den eigentlichen Gegenstand seiner Philosophie bilden, hat er sie eigentlich beruehrt (27)." (My translation)

[2] ". . . waehrend Nietzsches Einzelgaenger jede Gesellschaft ueberschreitet und sich jenseits und ausserhalb aller gesellschaftlichen Bindungen vollendet. Allerdings kann man auch sagen, dass er *vor* aller Gesellschaft existiert" (Polin, 28). (My translation).

[3] "Das *Ziel der Menschheit* kann nicht am Ende liegen, sondern nur in ihren hoechsten Exemplaren" (6: 308).

202).[4]

Placing his hopes for the future on a special kind of being who stands above common humanity leads Nietzsche to dismiss ordinary human beings as valueless. As Kaufmann summarizes, "What is worthless to start with, cannot acquire value by multiplication. If man's value is zero, no addition of such zeros will ever lead to any value" (*Nietzsche*, 150). Through Zarathustra's mouth, Nietzsche condemns the existing states, which he perceives as suffocating the "higher type" in the mediocrity of the human masses:

> Many too many are born: the state was invented for the superfluous! . . . Only there, where the state ceases, does the man who is not superfluous begin: does the song of the necessary man, the unique and irreplaceable melody, begin. There, where the state *ceases* – look here, my brothers. Do you not see it: the rainbow and the bridges to the Superman?" (*Zarathustra*, 76 – 78).[5]

The democratic state opposes two important Nietzschean ideals. First, democracy is based upon majority consent and individual conformity to this consensus. Thus it denies the realization of individuality that prompts all action from a Nietzschean point of view (c.f. *Beyond*, 137 - 39). Secondly, acceptance of consensus denies a basic truth in Nietzsche's perception of life:

> Life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation" (*Beyond*, 203).[6]

The only socio-political system which is in accordance with Nietzschean ideals is an aristocratic order led by a strongly-willed elite acting on "noble" self-interest:

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[4]"Das Wesentliche an einer guten und gesunden Aristokratie ist aber, dass sie sich *nicht* als Funktion (sei es des Koenigthums, sei es des Gemeinwesens), sondern als dessen *Sinn* und hoechste Rechtfertigung fuehlt. . . . Ihr Grundglaube muss eben sein, dass die gesellschaft *nicht* um der Gesellschaft willen dasein duerfe, sondern nur als Unterbau und Geruest, an dem sich eine ausgesuchte Art Wesen zu ihrer hoeheren Aufgabe und ueberhaupt zu einem hoeheren *Sein* emporzuheben vermag" (15: 224 - 25).

[5]"Viel zu Viele werden geboren: fuer die Ueberfluessigen ward der Staat erfunden! . . . Dort, wo der Staat aufhoert, da beginnt erst der Mensch, der nicht ueberfluessig ist: da beginnt das Lied des Nothwendigen, die einmalige und unersetzliche Weise. Dort, wo der Staat *aufhoert*, – so seht mir doch hin, meine Brueder! Seht ihr ihn nicht, den Regenbogen und die Bruecken des Uebermenschen?" (13: 59, 61).

[6]"Leben selbst ist *wesentlich* Aneignung, Verletzung, Ueberwaeltigung des Fremden und Schwaecheren, Unterdrueckung, Haerte, Aufzwaengung eigener Formen, Einverleibung und mindestens, mildestens Ausbeutung" (15: 225).

> The noble type of man experiences *itself* as determining values; it does not need approval; it judges, 'what is harmful to me is harmful in itself'; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is *value-creating*. Everything it knows as part of itself it honors: such a morality is self-glorification. In the foreground there is the feeling of fulness, of power. . . . The noble human being honors himself as one who is powerful, also as one who has power over himself. . . . Noble and courageous human beings who think that way are furthest removed from that morality which finds the distinction of morality precisely in pity, or in acting for others, or in *desinteressement* (*Beyond*, 205).[7]

For mankind as a whole to realize the superhuman ideal, the members of the "higher type" must be free to organize public affairs according to their own interests. Eden summarizes:

> While the exceptions can never become the rule, they are the key to the progress of mankind beyond the moral plane. When they do turn out right, they create a style in which man's original nature and a second cultural nature can live in coordination and harmony. The higher men create the forms in which a noble life is possible for a species of (common) men who are not exceptions (119).

However favorable the political conditions are for those who attempt to realize themselves as supermen, ultimately these conditions are inconsequential. The realization of the ideal is possible only individually. Consequently, it is extra-social and extra-political.

Grove's description of Abe's involvement in *Fruits of the Earth* closely resembles Nietzsche's view of democracy. The more Abe becomes involved in politics, the less he realizes his private ambitions. *Fruits of the Earth* shows that the decline in Abe's fortunes

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[7]"Die vornehme Art Mensch fuehlt *sich* als werthbestimmend, sie hat nicht noethig, sich gutheissen zu lassen, sie urtheilt "was mir schaedlich ist, das ist an sich schaedlich", sie weiss sich als Das, was ueberhaupt erst Ehre den Dingen verleiht, sie ist *wertheschaffend*. Alles, was sie an sich kennt, ehrt sie: eine solche Moral ist Selbstverherrlichung. Im Vordergrunde steht das Gefuehl der Fuelle, der Macht. . . . Der vornehme Mensch ehrt in sich den Maechtigen, auch Den, welcher Macht ueber sich selbst hat. . . . Vornehme und Tapfere, welche so denken, sind am entferntesten von jener Moral, welche gerade im Mitleiden oder in Handeln fuer andere oder im desinteressement das Abzeichen des Moralischen sieht" (15: 227 - 28).

is linked to his increased involvement with, even dependence upon the approval of, his neighbors. In the initial stages of his ventures, the few other settlers in the district are unimportant for Abe. Other people become significant only when he needs them to fulfill his ambitions:

> I'll tell you why I need neighbours. Because I need roads; because I need cross-ditches and other improvements. And as the kids grow up, I'll need a school. That's why I need neighbours (37).

Abe's statement echoes the Nietzschean attitude - which we have seen also in Len Sterner - that self-realization justifies using other people. Abe is not at all interested in the society formed by his neighbors, but he is inadvertently drawn into it. He does only what he considers necessary for his personal goals, but in the eyes of most of the neighbors this qualifies him as a "natural leader" (256). Abe is busy with his haying and thus not even present when the other settlers decide that "there's only one name fitting" (59). When they inform him of their decision,

> Abe listened in silence; but he experienced a thrill. That moment his aspirations underwent an extension which embraced the whole district. He suddenly felt it to be inevitable that, in the long run, he should enter municipal politics and look after the district which bore his name (60).

Abe is thus caught in a dilemma of which he is dimly aware. He has the opportunity to exert his power over much more than just his farm and thus to force his will upon his environment more easily than before. However, his new responsibilities divert his time and energy from the immediate concerns of his farm.

Abe would be, at least on the material level, the superior leader Nietzsche envisioned if he were able to establish himself in the district on terms completely suited to his ambitions and if his neighbors followed his example. Abe's essentially selfish actions benefit everybody. His hiring of Blaine against the opposition of the school board is the best example of this behavior. He regards the other settlers as his subjects whom he can treat like his children: "He felt he was doing what was best for the district. He was content to force his better judgment on them if need be" (65). At this early stage, Abe's extension of his power appears to him a risk worth taking. The immediate benefits are clearly preferable to any hypothetical drawbacks. The negative consequences evolve only later.

Abe's leadership creates a rudimentary form of what Stanley McMullin referred to as "a new social order based on agrarian principles" (82). This order is a patriarchal society with Abe Spalding as benevolent dictator: "Abe might refuse to consult them; but he was the man to do the right thing" (68). Indeed, everything Abe does for his own profit turns out to be advantageous for the district as a whole. This situation echoes the consequences Nietzsche saw arising from the "noble man's" motto, "what is harmful to me is harmful in itself" (c.f. *Beyond*, 205). Abe's behavior during the flood (66 - 67) is the best example of Abe's relationship to his neighbors. He turns to action only when his own achievement is threatened, but once he has taken charge, "his captaincy went unchallenged. None of those who saw him that day disputed his leadership for years to follow. He did not complain; he accepted things as they were and did what had to be done" (67). His neighbors, for whom he is "a hero and a saga-figure, loved by few, hated by some, but willy-nilly admired by all" (85), are essentially negligible figures.

Grove creates in Abe a character who appears to stand above his neighbors in a manner that resembles, at least on the material level, the relationship Nietzsche saw between "higher type" and common man. The political system of Spalding District does not, however, allow for the special treatment of the elite which Nietzsche advocated. Grove's portrait of democracy in *Fruits of the Earth* focusses on the rule - completely opposed to Nietzschean values - that everybody's vote has the same weight. For democracy to work properly, the voters have to be capable of choosing the best candidate. The political developments in *Fruits of the Earth* indicate that Abe is justified when he "despise[s] the intellectual powers of most of the 'crowd'" (147) who, by following Wheeldon, demonstrate their lack of political understanding. Grove's portrait of Abe's opponents in the community echoes the disgust for common people that Nietzsche frequently expressed by referring to them as "the mob" (c.f. *Zarathustra*, 297). The majority of settlers in Spalding District, particularly those who actively oppose Abe, are incapable of pursuing their own goals effectively. In addition, they attempt to obstruct Abe's progress. The agrarian society that Grove favors throughout his oeuvre is so strongly oriented toward individual achievement that communal life appears primarily as an unwanted distraction for the farmer's energies.

Abe's attitude eventually renders him as alienated from his neighbors as he is from his family. "Never mind what others do" (102) is his maxim in all affairs, including district politics. Harrison has summarized the effect of Abe's approach: "In pursuit of his

vision Abe becomes a cold and aloof personality, expecting the district and municipal institutions he leads to work like machines" ("Rolvaag, Grove," 256). But Abe's power in the district has a different basis than on the farm where only his material achievement counts. Democracy requires that Abe gain his neighbors' support.

The democratic demand for public approval of the leader's decisions proves its defects when Abe opposes his neighbors' opinion over political restructuring. The political and social decline of the district after Abe's defeat shows that his misgivings about the social order of the district are justified:

> His whole nature revolted against the scheme. . . . Above all, he felt in this innovation the approach of an order in which the control of the state over the individual would be strengthened through a conformity against which he rebelled (155).

The description of Abe's electoral defeat emphasizes all those elements that Nietzsche had criticized about democracy. Rather than being a forum for Abe to have his superior position confirmed by appreciative neighbors, council meeting and vote take place in the democratic framework, which Grove presents as "a prearranged play" (159), a conspiracy intended "to settle the old score of envy" (160).

Abe's defeat has two basic causes. First, technically, he has forfeited his right to vote by not paying his taxes. He is thus being punished for having served his own interests rather than those of the community. Secondly, and more importantly, he is the victim of a system that treats everybody equally regardless of their achievements. Nietzsche had attacked this practice as the essence of the market-place, his metaphor for the shallowness and ignorance of the masses:

> 'You Higher Men' - thus the mob blink - 'there are no Higher Men, we are all equal, man is but man, before God - we are all equal!' Before God! But now this God has died. And let us not be equal before the mob. You Higher Men, depart from the market-place! (*Zarathustra*, 297).[5]
>
> And in the market-place one convinces with gestures. But reasons make

[5] "'Ihr Ihr hoeheren Menschen, - so blinzelt der Poebel - es giebt keine hoeheren Menschen, wir sind Alle gleich, Mensch ist Mensch, vor Gott - sind wir alle gleich!' Vor Gott! - Nun aber starb dieser Gott. Vor dem Poebel aber wollen wir nicht gleich sein. Ihr hoeheren Menschen, geht weg vom Markt!" (13: 362).

the mob mistrustful (*Zarathustra*, 300).[9]

We can easily read Abe's political fate through Nietzsche's image. At least in material terms – the terms most important in this agricultural community – Abe clearly is the higher man, the man of reason. But the people, mistrustful of his success, support Wheeldon and his associates who have nothing to offer but empty gestures. In the democratic process Abe's voice counts only as much as that of the shady American Wheeldon.[10]

Abe is doomed to fail, because he must submit his power to the approval of his neighbors in a totally un-Nietzschean manner, yet insists on his Nietzschean autonomy – "*he* was no mixer; *he* followed a lonely path – worst of crimes in western Canada" (164). In Grove's portrait, democracy demands conformity to the least common social denominator and consequently obstructs the talents of outstanding people such as Abe. Initially, Abe can repudiate democracy as if he had read Nietzsche: "I'll tell you what your precious democracy is: A system devised to keep the man who stands out from the common crowd down to the common level. That is all" (168).

Abe's Nietzschean self-centeredness makes it easy for him to withdraw from the affairs of the district altogether: "Never again would he meddle in public affairs" (166). But Grove points out that even if he wants to, Abe cannot live in the total isolation that had been possible for a character like Niels Lindstedt. Without Abe's leadership, the district deteriorates (211), and the bad roads and irrigation ditches affect even Abe. His question, "Why can't they leave me alone?" (168) is futile; in the western Canada of 1920 everyone is a member of society, whether he wants to be or not.

When Abe finally decides to get involved in the affairs of the district again, he does so because he has discovered an un-Nietzschean social conscience which, as

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[9]"Und auf dem Markte ueberzeugt man mit Gebaerden. Aber Gruende machen den Poebel misstrauisch" (13: 367).

[10]Grove stresses repeatedly that Wheeldon, "though naturalized in Canada, remained at heart a citizen of the United States" (162). There is no obvious reason within the novel to make Wheeldon an American. Grove may have done it because the equation USA = materialism was an established factor in his novels since *A Search for America* and he may have hoped to profit once again from the anti-Americanism that had figured in his greatest success. Also, Wheeldon can be read to represent the republicanism of American democracy in which the power resides in the people, demanding consensus and conformity and inviting the ills of populism. Ironically, Abe's individualism invites this development.

Spettigue has argued, parallels the acceptance of social responsibility by the protagonists of Grove's later novels:

> The grand gesture of individual defiance is rejected . . . in favor of the weary acceptance of the wise man's burden to lead a stiff-neck people for the short while that leadership is possible. . . . The *non serviam* is not a possible choice for Grove's later aged hero ("Manitoba," 32).

We have to take this statement with some reservations since the political leaders Grove depicts in *The Master of the Mill* once again act much like Nietzsche's elite when they pursue political power as personal power.

Abe returns to the community in his old autocratic fashion when he closes the school without a mandate. Robin Mathews argues that Abe's action is "an act of conservative protest, not of social regeneration" (*Canadian Literature*, 73). Grove's portrait of Abe's action shows that Mathews' political persuasion causes him to miss the point here. The social regeneration Abe brings about may be conservative, but the narrative leaves no doubt that the renewed old order is vastly preferable to the one that had developed in Abe's absence. Dr. Vanbruik summarizes the problem created by the democratic election: "The district has been without its leader. It has been run in opposition to its natural leader" (256). Having taken charge again, Abe may restore the social order which had existed before his defeat. Grove portrays social change as inevitable and as opposed to the agrarian values Abe represents, but the description of the scene implies that, at least temporarily, Abe can lead the affairs of the district in the right direction and that the majority of the settlers are on his side (264). Compared to him, the other settlers appear irrelevant as political figues; they are zeros in the Nietzschean sense.

In *Fruits of the Earth*, Grove presents a benevolent dictatorship as preferable to any other form of rule. Abe's leadership is certainly not perfect – the novel reveals many of its flaws – but it appears best suited to the agrarian society of Spalding District: "There were not a few who breathed the traditional sigh of relief" (266), but they applaud a non-democratic act. Grove has established, however, that the political system of Spalding District follows democratic rules. Consequently, Abe's leadership has to be confirmed by an election in which all those factors that had led to Abe's withdrawal from politics can come into play again: Grove emphasizes in the novel the inability of a Nietzschean character to function in a democratic society. At the same time, however,

Grove echoes Nietzsche's views of politics by showing the inability of the settlers to govern themselves sensibly. *Fruits of the Earth* presents a benevolent dictatorship as an almost ideal form of government for an agrarian society, but the novel contains no suggestion how such a system might be brought into place in Canada, a country with a firmly established democratic system.

The Master of the Mill, considered by many critics to be Grove's "masterpiece" (c.f. Bader, 229), differs from its predecessors in narrative technique as well as in thematic content. In the novel, Grove abandons linear narrative, used in his previous novels, to express the workings of Sam Clark's mind through flashbacks, associations, and time shifts. Thus Grove conveys Sam's inability to understand his fate in a world governed by seemingly incomprehensible forces.

Grove remarked that the novel had "the inevitable form – the only form in which the book can convey its message" (*Myself*, 438). Grove was certainly correct in calling the chosen narrative method "inevitable," since it reflects Sam Clark's life and puts him in sharp contrast to his son Edmund who is extremely aware of the forces that shape his life.

Ironically, Grove creates his most Nietzschean protagonist in a novel that denies most emphatically the Nietzschean vision of self-realization. The "message" of *The Master of the Mill* that Grove emphasizes is the individual's inability to determine his or her own existence. In Grove's portrait, decisions which others have made in the past inevitably constrain the individual's scope of action. This "message" is the opposite of the ideal of individualist self-fulfilment which inspires the protagonists of the novels we have examined so far. The world of *The Master of the Mill* is dominated by gigantic superhistorical forces which make even the thought of successful individual self-determination appear absurd. Grove emphasizes the power of these forces by ascribing to Edmund the unusual ability to understand these forces. These character traits make Edmund stand out from, and in many respects appear superior to, his fellow human beings.

The Master of the Mill portrays its protagonists in power structures that are new in Grove's oeuvre. One of the most obvious differences between *The Master of the Mill* and its predecessors is the shift in focus from primary to secondary industry. In his Canadian novels up to *Two Generations*, Grove focusses on the farmer and his chances to realize

himself in a more or less independent lifestyle. In "Democracy and Education" Grove calls farming the highest form of occupation. This "personal preference," he argues, "is due to three factors: first, it is the most direct way of making one's daily bread; secondly, it involves an outdoor life; thirdly, it leaves the mind free to follow its own bent" (395). The mental independence which Grove proclaims to be an integral element of the agricultural life is the most important factor in this argument. A true democracy, which would be the best possible form of government, could come into existence only if the masses were given the opportunity to develop their minds. *Fruits of the Earth* presents such an education as a dire necessity. "Democracy and Education" is thus in line with the essence of Grove's prairie writing in which he stresses the significance of mental independence over material achievement.

However, by the time "Democracy and Education" was published, Grove had come to question the ideal of agricultural independence. While Niels Lindstedt lives in seclusion from the forces of the outside world, isolation is no longer possible for John Elliot, Abe Spalding, and Ralph Patterson. The agricultural independence praised in "Democracy and Education" is thus essentially a nostalgic ideal, but one that Grove repeatedly celebrated in his fiction. If we read the pastoral ideal proposed in "Democracy and Education" together with Grove's bleak portrait of the industrialized society in *The Master of the Mill*, the combined message of the two texts approaches a Luddite hate for, even fear of, machinery and the social changes brought about by technology. *The Master of the Mill*, Grove's account of the forces shaping industrialized society, clearly asserts that the individual farmer has no chance to extricate himself from the power of the mill. Farmers exist, if at all, only on the margin of a larger system of powers which is defined by the mill. Personal power belongs only to the master of the mill.

Grove's correspondence indicates that *The Master of the Mill* occupied him for about fifteen years, from 1928 to 1943, during which he encountered a number of philosophical concepts. In particular Henri Bergson's concept of the *homo faber* was a significant philosophical influence upon *The Master of the Mill*. Other authors, including H.G. Wells and Oswald Spengler,[11] contribute to Grove's portrait of modern society and help to explain some elements of the novel. However, *The Master of the Mill* is so strongly

[11]The degree of Spengler's influence on *The Master of the Mill* is debatable. We shall consider this question in our discussion of the superhistorical forces which are central to the world portrayed in *The Master of the Mill*. It has been argued that this element of the novel derives from Spengler's thought.

concerned with struggles for power and the effect that power has upon individuals and society that its emphasis parallels Nietzsche's preoccupation with power as the most important force in life.

From the beginning of the novel, Grove asserts that the mill controls, rather than is controlled by, its supposed master, Sam Clark.

> The mill which, in a physical sense, he had largely created had been his love before he had owned it; it had become the object of his hatred after it had become his; it had always ruled his destiny; it had been, it still was, the central fact in his life; it had never permitted him to be entirely himself; it had determined his every action. . . . Whatever had happened to him, in his inner as well as his outer life, had been contingent upon its existence (19 - 20).

Rather than a tool for its directors, the mill is "like a fact of nature, helping and harming the good and the bad alike, with . . . indifference" (22) and "a symbol and monument of the world order which . . . [was] ruling the country by its sheer power of producing wealth" (21). Individual human power can exist in this capitalist order only in association with the mill. On the surface, this power is primarily economic. With the help of the mill, the Clarks have been able to control the material life of the town and to make decisions that affect the national industry. But gradually, Edmund, aware of the potential of his material wealth, develops economic power into the even stronger social power that enables its executor in effect to rule almost all aspects of the lives of the people subjected to this power. The material power whose acquisition had been the motive for Rudyard's building of the mill eventually becomes so unimportant that Edmund can consider dispensing with it (312).

In the three generations of Clarks, Grove creates three different approaches to power. Considering each of them in turn, we will see the extent to which Grove was voicing a cultural pessimism that contrasts strongly with the optimism he derives from Nietzsche and expresses in *Wanderungen*. While Niels Lindstedt can assert himself against anything but his sexual passion and Abe Spalding can establish a semblance of a social order with himself as the decisive force, such individual expression of power is no longer possible in the world Grove describes in *The Master of the Mill*. The most important metaphor of the novel, in contrast to the farm as an individualist "seigneurial sign-manual" with which Abe Spalding wants to dominate his environment, is the all-powerful avalanche:

> The metaphor was of a steep, hanging mountain side where a man swings a pickaxe high overhead, to bring it down with tremendous force on the upper reaches of the slope. Unexpectedly the whole mountain side trembles under the blow. Rock, debris, soil, giant trees begin to slip, slowly at first, then with increasing momentum. A landslide has been started by that blow. The man who levelled it stands for a moment bewildered and stares; and then he, too, slips and is buried, sucked under by the sliding masses. Within a space of time measured by minutes the geography of a region is changed. . . . Now things will never again be as they were. The very position of the earth in space is affected (306).

The essence of Grove's metaphor is that human beings cannot control their lives; that ultimately there is no self-determination. This position contradicts the Nietzschean proclamation of self-determination as the only means to satisfaction and happiness. Grove demonstrates repeatedly in the novel the avalanche-like manner in which human beings are affected by events upon which they have not had any impact themselves. Once the mill has been established, it dominates the fates of all people involved in its operation and leaves no room for personal independence.

Before considering individual responses to this determining force, we have to realize the significance of its existence in Grove's oeuvre. Sam Clark discovers the existence of the force and the effect it has on his ambitions when he takes over control of the mill after his father's death. Sam dreams of "winning his freedom, cutting himself loose from the past, breaking with a system which he hated" (58). But only hours later, Sam is forced to realize that "his father's crime had made him, the son, the slave of the mill" (94). While the experiences of Abe Spalding and Ralph Patterson demonstrate the dependency of the farmer upon external factors, Sam Clark's experience shows that the secondary industry, which has such significant power over the farmers, renders its owners puppets in a larger development. When Sam accepts his limited role and attempts to realize himself as much as possible, he discovers that each of his humanitarian intentions would, if realized, harm the other mills and effect the opposite of what he intends (112). Sam is constantly forced to choose between evils instead of being able to achieve the improvements he longs for. He is, as he realizes his father was, "a cog in a machine" (112). Rudyard is as caught up in the mechanism of the world of the Langholm mill as Sam, but as its creator he is more than just one of its elements: he is the man

who strikes the blow that starts the avalanche.

Rudyard and Sam are aware to very different degrees of the possibilities and limitations of their power. While Sam's every thought and action is permeated by his awareness of the power of the mill and its ramifications, Rudyard lives in almost complete ignorance of the possibilities – positive as well as negative – that his newly–acquired power makes possible. Rudyard is basically just a shrewd and rather ruthless businessman ready to grasp an occasion for the increase of his wealth when it offers itself. His inability to perceive his changed position in the world becomes evident from a small detail: "The business was expanding at a fabulous rate, now of its own momentum. But old Mr Clark was still living in his little frame house on Fourth Street" (72 – 73).

Rudyard has the ability to acquire great wealth, but Grove demonstrates very early that Rudyard's achievement is due more to Sam's imagination than to Rudyard's business sense:

> The first vision had been Sam's; just as the vision of the dam had been his; and slowly he had imposed it upon his father. . . . When, in the course of time, Rudyard Clark had carried it out, however, he had never given his son the slightest acknowledgement; in fact, he had kept him jealously away from any participation in his counsels (26 – 27).

Rudyard shrewdly utilizes Sam's mental powers; without his son he would essentially be just another entrepreneur successful because unscrupulous. While Sam's awareness of his power separates him from the people around him,

> [Sam's] father . . . had never hesitated to talk to these men about their private and intimate affairs; or to correct them if their manner did not meet with his entire approval. How strange, the senator thought, that his father, the autocrat, the never–to–be–contradicted master, should have shown himself affable, ready even to jest and to laugh with his subordinates; and that he should have commanded an all the more unquestioning obedience, yes, an affectionate anticipation of his desires (55 – 56).

In order to realize the full potential of the instrument in his hands, Rudyard would have to consider himself above the people rather than one of them.[12] But this morally dubious

[12]Rudyard's long–term plans for the complete mechanization of the expanded mill, causing unemployment for thousands of workers, is certainly "something

ideal is put in practice only by Rudyard's grandson, Edmund. Rudyard himself is the man of Grove's metaphor of the avalanche. He sets the development in motion by building the mill, but he is oblivious to the wider consequences of his action.

Sam Clark is the opposite of his father. While Rudyard establishes the mill only as a means to accumulate financial wealth, Sam is fully aware of its social power and its potential to help him achieve huge goals:

> *He* would be the master; *he* would direct the fortunes of the mill for the good of mankind. . . . He would raise wages and give the men a voice in the administration. . . . Producers, mill-hands, and consumers, all were to profit. That had been his dream (39 - 40).

Sam's well-rounded education and sophistication have made him a "dreamer" (38) who imagines the world to be receptive to his humanitarian ideals. But altruism has no place in a world dominated by the struggle for power between antagonistic parties.

Sam is not prepared to accept that he has to play a role determined by power relationships working in a manner that echoes Nietzsche's description in *The Will to Power*:

> My idea is that every specific body strives to become master of all space, and to extend its power (its will to power), and to thrust back everything that resists it. But inasmuch as it is continually meeting the same endeavours on the part of other bodies, it concludes by coming to terms with those (by 'combining' with those) which are sufficiently related to it - *and thus they conspire together for power* (2: 121).[13]

Sam, however, cannot cope with a reality which forces him to be egotistic and competitive rather than human and altruistic. Before taking charge of the affairs of the mill, Sam believes that its powers are determined by the person who uses them. But

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[12](cont'd) tremendous, cruel, soulless" (106), but this plan, too, is Sam's idea. Rudyard merely intends to realize it. This plan again demonstrates Rudyard' ability to implement concepts to increase his profits, and his lack of moral scruples. It also shows that Sam's creativity is as responsible for the mechanical perfection of the mill as is his father's practical sense.

[13]"Meine Vorstellung ist, dass jeder specifische Koerper darnach strebt, ueber den ganzen Raum Herr zu werden und seine Kraft auszudehnen (- sein Wille zur Macht:) und alles Das zurueckzustossen, was seiner Ausdehnung widerstrebt. Aber er stoesst fortwaehrend auf gleiche Bestrebungen andrer Koerper und endet, sich mit denen zu arrangiren ("vereinigen"), welche ihm verwandt genug sind: - so *conspiriren sie dann zusammen zur Macht*" (19: 106).

when he discovers the fraudulent origins of that power he rejects it as altogether evil. Rudyard's fraud and his long-term designs for the mill force Sam to operate the mill in his father's fashion which does not permit the realization of humanitarian ideals. In portraying Sam's inability to fulfill what he perceives as his moral obligation, Grove expresses an extremely pessimistic view of the future. The failure of the idealistic Sam Clark to fulfild his moral aspirations in the world of *The Master of the Mill* shows that power struggles prevent the creation of a more humane world. Sam's preoccupation with the past eventually leads him to a complete rejection of his origins, culminating in his question, "Can one be descended from a tainted stock and not be tainted?" (175). Sam applies this vision of original sin not only to himself and his children but also to the mill and its power. For him, power of such a "tainted" origin becomes necessarily evil, and since he cannot destroy the mill, the best thing he can do to appease his conscience is to make no use of its power.

The error in this reaction becomes evident during the strike that accompanies the mechanization of 1900. Motivated by the "desire to be away during the outbreak of the strike" (164), Sam escapes to Italy. The defeat of the strikers demonstrates that the power system of the mill runs its course independently of whoever is in charge. Bob Stevens's ruthless handling of the strike causes unnecessary harm to the strikers, but the general outcome is inevitable. Even Sam Clark eventually comes to understand that his beliefs have no basis in reality:

> As the senator thought of that meeting, one thing struck him as peculiar; he had acted and spoken in a manner opposed to all his preconceived principles. He had always contended that, rightly handled, the mechanization of processes formerly performed by hand contained the greatest blessing that had ever come to mankind; every man formerly employed in industry was entitled to as many of the benefits which such a mechanization conferred a- the owners of the plants. But the moment he faced the concrete problem, he instinctively denied these benefits to the men; it seemed imperative in the cause of law and order. Utopia would come in time, not now. If the men remained poor while the masters grew rich, it seemed a law of nature which he could not change. He arrived at this attitude quite instinctively, without conscious reference to his father. But he felt as if he was a link in a chain. Do nothing now; or as little as possible; enough to win the good will of the men; more radical changes must

> come from the generation to follow (171).

This passage demonstrates emphatically that Sam is a humanitarian living in a world which seems to follow Nietzsche's dogma that nothing matters but the acquisition and use of power. Sam's difficulties in dealing with the power structure of the world in which he lives develop from his well-developed moral sense. He is too well aware of possibly negative consequences of his actions for others. Consequently he questions his own abilities so strongly that he finally sees himself as powerless:

> He had never felt a Titan. He was an ordinary, honest, well-intentioned man, ready to be the first to doubt his own powers. Yet he had suffered from the fact that his father did not think him able to assist in holding the giant concern together. . . . Sam had never been allowed to do things on his own responsibility; and so he had lost the power to do anything but follow a lead (104).

His motto seems to be, "*Ecce animula tua!* – 'There stands your little soul.' He had been in the habit of repeating it to himself whenever he saw the mill" (59). Confronted with the mill, Sam is not even able to say, "*Ecce homo.*" Focussing only on his limitations, Sam denies that he has in himself the power to realize himself.[14] Sam approaches the mill already convinced of his own inability to persevere against it and he surrenders his power even before it is challenged. Sam's failure, due to his unwillingness to accumulate power for himself, echoes Nietzsche's dictum that any success depends on the accumulation and use of individual power.

Sam turns his perception of his incapacity into a self-fulfilling prophecy when he resigns himself to the thought that "he had had to live in a system so long that he had become powerless to change that system" (194) and forgets that he was the one who devised most of it. The moral deterioration among the workers after Sam's well-intended effort to improve their standard of living (254 – 55) demonstrates the impracticality of Sam's plans. His inability to withstand Edmund's drive for power best exemplifies the dangers of an attitude that refuses to acknowledge that the world is one of continuous struggle for power. Eventually, Sam is reduced to a pathetic figure, unable to influence events he is suspicious of, "superseded in a world which he did not know" (274).

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[14]Nietzsche considered human beings inferior to supermen. The expression "*ecce homo*" – the title of his autobiographical writings – consequently includes the admission of shortcomings together with the potential for a superhuman life.

At the end of his life, Sam realizes that he has failed to achieve anything he can be proud of:

> As far as the problem of the mill went, the total effect of the life of that son of his had merely been to accelerate the pace of events. If it had not been for that son, he thought, the slow process of evolution might have outlasted his, the senator's life. In compromise after compromise the same end might have been achieved without bloodshed (321).

His moral scruples had prevented him from taking part in the affairs of the mill. Resistance to Edmund's designs would not have stopped the process, but might have moderated its effects. Grove makes Sam Clark experience the dichotomy of morality and power and conclude that in this world the two are irreconcilable, that power will always prevail, and that morality can moderate only slightly the clash of the various centers of power. But to achieve this moderation, the individual has to accept the Nietzschean view of the world as a continuous power struggle in which morality is a hindrance(cf. *Will*, 2: 146).

Sam was the opposite in character of Rudyard, and Edmund is now the opposite of Sam. To a certain extent "Edmund was his grandfather resurrected" (180), but there is a significant difference between grandfather and grandson. Edmund's awareness of the possibilities of power distinguishes him from Rudyard and makes him "the culmination of a development towards the protagonist with absolute scope for action" (Spettigue, *Grove*, 124).

Edmund Clark is the one character in Grove's oeuvre who comes closest to being a Nietzschean superman. He is, to a large extent, Grove's most serious consideration of the Nietzschean ideal. As Blodgett argues, Edmund stands in a clear line of development in Grove's oeuvre:

> The line of absolutism that runs from Sterner's pure egoism through Spalding's sense of self as family and society assumes in Edmund its fulness of form. . . . Edmund is Grove's superb achievement as symbolical, theoretical man (121).

The Nietzschean traits of Grove's other characters allow us to identify the characteristics Blodgett emphasizes as the expression of the Nietzschean element in Grove's writing. Edmund Clark is not a realized superman, but he resembles the Nietzschean "higher type" that stands between common man and superman. He seems, by virtue of his character, to be capable of achieving goals impossible for others. Two of Edmund's

outstanding traits, his quest for power and his self-control, are among those charcteristics that Nietzsche considered essential to personal success.

Edmund embodies the attitude that Sam discovers only at the end of his life, "All questions beginning with 'why' [are] idle. Nothing count[s] but fact" (38). Unlike Sam, the dreamer who begins by mistakingly believing that he can radically influence the course of events, Edmund is highly aware of the forces that determine his role in the world:

> We are sitting at a table and playing a game of chance the laws of which we don't understand; and somewhere around the board sits an invisible player whom nobody knows and who takes all the tricks; that player is destiny, or God if you like, or the future (226).

Edmund's insight summarizes the message of *The Master of the Mill.* The novel emphasizes that individuals do not have unlimited opportunities for self-realization and that actions of the past, frequently actions by other people, strictly limit individual freedom.

Grove expresses in *The Master of the Mill* a deterministic view of human history in which the individual has to fight even for the smallest degree of self-realization. To achieve this limited success, Nietzschean behavior appears indispensable. Edmund's willingness to accept this insight distinguishes his perception of his own place in the world from the individualist self-definitions of other characters in the novel:

> I am humbly content to be the tool of evolution; or, if you prefer, to experiment. I want to go forward, not turn back, no matter where (227).
>
> All I am certain of is that I am doing what is in line with the logic of evolution (303).

Edmund's belief in evolution shows that his character is not completely Nietzschean but shows signs also of other philosophies, particularly Henri Bergson's. Nietzsche's view of evolution was mixed. While he believed in the limited evolution of individual species - the development from man to "higher type," for example - he did not accept biological evolution as a general principle of nature (c.f. *Will* 2: 155 - 60). The concept of eternal recurrence also contradicts the idea that there is a coherent evolutionary factor in the universe. Sam resents the limits which prevent him from realizing his most cherished ideals. Edmund, however, accepts those limits and uses the freedom left to him for his actions, approaching his existence very practically and rationally. Rather than striving

for unrealistic goals and experiencing defeat, Edmund plans his actions and uses his knowledge to increase his power to the highest degree. This creative acceptance of his limitations conforms to a view of life that Nietzsche advocated.

Edmund's contentment with being nothing but "the tool of evolution" amounts to that state of mind for which Nietzsche used the term "amor fati":

> My formula for greatness in man is *amor fati*: the fact that man wishes nothing to be different, either in front of him or behind him, or for all eternity. Not only must the necessary be borne, and on no account concealed, – all idealism is falsehood in the face of necessity, – but it must also be loved" (*Ecce Homo*, 54).[15]

Understanding and accepting his role in the world, Edmund achieves a state of mind parallel to that of the painter Klingsor in Hermann Hesse's novella "Klingsors letzter Sommer" (c.f. ch. 2). "Amor fati" is not the pure fatalism that it seems to be at first glance. Rather, it is the joyful acceptance of one's life, including those limits that cannot be overcome. Walter Kaufmann has aptly summarized this principle:

> The man who perfects himself . . . achieves ultimate happiness and experiences such an overwhelming joy that he no longer feels concerned about the 'justification' of the world: he affirms it forward, backward, and 'in all eternity'. . . . It is noteworthy that Nietzsche also says that this feeling of joy, this *'amor fati'*, is his 'formula for the greatness of a human being.' Power is still the standard of value – but this joy is the conscious feeling that is inextricably connected with a man's possession of power. Conversely, the man who experiences this joy is the powerful man – and instead of relying on heavenly powers to redeem him, to give meaning to his life, and to justify the world, he gives meaning to his own life by achieving perfection and exulting in every moment (*Nietzsche*, 323 – 24).

Edmund's self-image, conveyed with "something like exaltation" (225), enables Grove to characterize Edmund's role by referring to the philosophical origin of this stance:

> The old man had the courage to sweep a worn-out world into limbo. He had

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[15]"Meine Formel fuer die Groesse am Menschen ist amor fati: dass man Nichts anders haben will, vorwaerts nicht, rueckwaerts nicht, in alle Ewigkeit nicht. Das Nothwendige nicht bloss ertragen, noch weniger verhehlen – aller Idealismus ist Verlogenheit vor dem Nothwendigen –, sondern es *lieben*" (21: 211).

> long wanted to shape the mill to man's ultimate purpose. In him he felt the power to make nature subservient to his design, to the design of man himself. Man is *homo faber* as someone has said (225).

This "someone" is the French philosopher Henri Bergson who re-defines the essence of the human condition:

> If we could rid ourselves of all pride, if, to define our species, we kept strictly to what the historic and prehistoric periods show us to be the constant characteristic of man and of intelligence, we should say not *Homo sapiens*, but *Homo faber*. In short, *intelligence, considered in what seems to be its original feature, is the faculty of manufacturing artificial objects, especially tools to make tools, and of indefinitely varying the manufacture* (153 - 54).[16]

Defining himself as a *homo faber*, a person of and for the world of technology, and accepting the aims of the industrial system as his own, Edmund plans to remodel the world to make it the perfect subject of a machine-god by creating "a state based on social and economic realities instead of on political jugglings which have long since become meaningless. With only one master, one god: the machine" (287). In this new world, Edmund would be a prophet and high priest of the machine-god. By establishing such a world, Edmund would gain maximum control over his place in the world. He would not be in control of his own fate in the manner that Nietzsche had conceived, but he would be perfectly content with a fate dictated to him by the machine-god. Having defined his self-realization completely within the framework given by the technological world order, he is absolutely powerless to realize any aspect of himself outside that framework. Ultimately he is thus not the superhuman master of his fate Nietzsche would have applauded, but another cog in the machine, only marginally more independent than the workers who are nothing but "slaves to the machines" (192). Grove's reference to

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[16]Grove read Bergson's *Creative Evolution* in 1927 and commented on it extensively in a letter to Watson Kirkconnell. Grove generally rejected the ideas put forth by Bergson, particularly the concept of the *homo faber*. "I ask myself, in certain sections, whether the book was not, like most economic books, written as a defence of industrial and commercial life. Personally, I believe that a tool invented means a certain amount of physical accomplishment and, therefore, of intelligence, *not gained but lost. Homo sapiens* it is, for me: that's what I want to be. To make the invention of mechanical tools - which is to me a side-issue - the essential characteristic of humanity, seems, to say the least, superficial. Has not human evolution (*true* evolution) stopped the moment invention began?" (*Letters*, 59).

Bergson's term and his depiction of the activity of the *homo faber* show that *The Master of the Mill* includes serious criticism of Bergsonian as well as of Nietzschean values.

Nietzschean traits nevertheless figure strongly in Edmund Clark's personality, particularly in his emotional constitution, or, rather, in his lack thereof. Douglas O. Spettigue's analysis demonstrates how strongly Grove emphasized in Edmund's character traits apparent in previous protagonists:

> Edmund, the polished, the dynamic, the calculating manipulator, financial genius and modern superman is a far cry from the Niels Lindstedts, Len Sterners and John Elliots, but he is, like them, the pioneer of new societies, the man of indomitable will. He is unlike them in having no recognizable humanity about him. Grove has so rarefied and abstracted the physical efforts of his pioneer into theory, rational dialogue and commentary, that his ultimate man, Edmund, seems a fanatic more soulless than the mill (*Grove*, 119).

Edmund thus emerges as the most thoroughly Nietzschean of Grove's protagonists. Edmund seems to have complete rational control over his behavior and conducts his relationships strictly along lines of rationalist egotism. He is thus, as Spettigue argues, a reappearance of Friedrich Karl Reelen forty years later ("Fanny," 55).

Like Reelen, Edmund Clark proves that a person living according to Nietzschean principles can be highly successful in the material world. Edmund becomes a successful fighter-pilot, single-handedly builds up Arbala mill, gains control of the external shares held by Cole, and ruthlessly manipulates the Prime Minister. This last action shows that he has more power than even the state. But, again like Reelen, he reveals no human emotions. He is, like the mill he builds, "indifferent to merely human excitements" (301), and the only aspect of him that can be called emotional is his passionate quest to perfect the power of a *homo faber*.

Edmund's complete failure as a human being shows in the manner in which he puts himself above other people as well as in his totally unemotional behavior in his marriage. Both of these serious shortcomings can be attributed to the Nietzschean concept that self-control forms the basis of all success. Financial power, created through the mill, enables Edmund to acquire significant social power. Through the mill he is able to direct and even define the lives of millions of people: "control of the mill, in the long run, means control of the country" (219). Edmund's drive for this control leads to his plan to create "a state based on social and economic realities" (287). Edmund is neither

uncertain about, nor disturbed by, the social consequences of this development:

> Do you deny that man was right when he fashioned that first tool of which I spoke? Well, by fashioning it, he learned to dispense with a helper. Do you deny that this industrial revolution contains the germs of the greatest blessing that has come to mankind? . . . Man cannot destroy it, even though he may wish to. But it will make a large fraction of mankind wither away. That is no disaster (312).

Rather than creating a machine-god that takes care of its subjects, Edmund is about to bring into existence a monster destroying those under its rule. This state which Edmund envisions is the same that Zarathustra had advocated:

> It was creators who created peoples and hung a faith and a love over them: thus they served life. It is destroyers who set snares for many and call it the state: they hung a sword and a hundred desires over them. . . . Everything about it is false. . . . Many, too many are born: the state was invented for the superfluous (*Zarathustra*, 75 - 76).[17]

Both Edmund and Zarathustra have the same intention. Reorganized according to Edmund Clark's design, the new state shall be ruled by an elite who will dominate the masses (227 - 28) and, as exemplified by Edmund, strive to realize themselves within that social framework. The concerns of those who do not belong to this elite are of absolutely no consequence to Edmund. His comment upon his grandfather's decision to use fraud in order to create the basis for his great enterprise betrays Edmund's acceptance of a philosophy which values only success and ignores the price of that success:

> It was against man's law; granted. He obeyed a higher law. No great man has ever hesitated about breaking man's law when a greater purpose was to be served by its breach. . . . The end justifies the means; it has always done so; it will always do so (225).

This attitude toward law and justice demonstrates parallels between Edmund's

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[17]"Schaffende waren es, die schufen die Voelker und haengten einen Glauben und eine Liebe ueber sie hin: also dienten sie dem Leben. Vernichter sind es, die stellen Fallen auf fuer Viele und heissen sie Staat: sie haengen ein Schwert und hundert Begierden ueber sie hin. . . . Falsch is alles an ihm. . . . Viel zu Viele werden geboren: fuer die Ueberfluessigen ward der Staat erfunden!" (13: 58 - 59).

convictions and Nietzsche's concepts. Believing that ultimately he alone can judge his actions, Edmund strongly resembles that figure whose attitude Nietzsche praised in his vision of "the criminal of the future":

> Is it impossible for us to imagine a social state in which the criminal will publicly denounce himself and dictate his own punishment, in the proud feeling that he is thus honouring the law which he himself has made, that he is exercising his power, the power of a lawmaker, in thus punishing himself? . . . Such would be the criminal of a possible future, a criminal who would, it is true, presuppose a future legislation based upon this fundamental idea: 'I yield in great things as well as in small only to the law which I myself have made' (*Dawn*, 184 - 85).[18]

Like the man in Nietzsche's vision, Edmund Clark acknowledges no laws that he has not created himself and thus puts himself above the consensus about rules and responsibilities on which social life is based.

Edmund Clark's behavior shows that Nietzschean ideals have a different value in *The Master of the Mill* than in *Fanny Essler*. While Greve portrays Friedrich Karl Reelen ambiguously and satirizes his egomania, Grove condemns Edmund Clark for having become totally inhuman in his pursuit of a Nietzschean ideal. Reelen desires Fanny and is able, at least occasionally, to show some emotion for her (c.f. 2, 188). Lady Clark's account of the events preceding her marriage to Edmund demonstrates, however, that Edmund regards their marriage purely as a rational agreement (245). The nature of their marriage becomes obvious from a detail that Grove only hints at when he has Edmund state,

> She and I have been married for two years. There is no sign of a child; there never will be. If I had not come to love, I have almost come to revere my wife for understanding why that can never be (218 - 19).

Edmund's veiled reference to the nature of his marriage makes it difficult to understand the implications. Robin Mathews concludes from this passage that Edmund "is

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[18]"Ist ein Zustand undenkbar, wo der Uebelthaeter sich selber zur Anzeige bringt, sich selber seine Strafe oeffentlich dictirt, im stolzen Gefuehle, dass er so das Gesetz ehrt, das er selber gemacht hat, dass er seine Macht ausuebt, indem er sich straft, die Macht des Gesetzgebers. . . . Diess waere der Verbrecher einer moeglichen Zukunft, welcher freilich auch eine Gesetzgebung der Zukunft voraussetzt, des Grundgedankens: 'ich beuge mich nur dem Gesetze, welches ich selber gegeben habe, im Kleinen und Grossen'" (10: 167 - 68).

apparently, sterile, if not impotent" ("Important Version," 250). Reading *The Master of the Mill* in the light of Nietzschean philisophy, I interpret this statement differently. In my understanding, Edmund's three-year affair with Maud Dolittle suggests that his sexual abstinence in his marriage is due not to physical inability but to an act of will. Edmund has largely sublimated his human traits, including his sexual passion, into his quest to establish a new social order. The ease with which he ends his affair with Maud Dolittle and his completely rational and unemotional behavior throughout the novel suggests that he has succeeded in that task over which Niels Lindstedt and Len Sterner despair. He has overcome his sexuality and thus lost a central part of his humanity.

Because of his ability to overcome his human emotions, passions, and weaknesses, Edmund has become a perfect tool of mechanical evolution, a perfect leading citizen of the industrial society that he helps to bring about. Embracing, almost passionately, his perceived existence as *homo faber*, he becomes a perfect wielder of technocratic power, but he is totally void of human values. He is a perfect *homo faber*, but he is a danger for the human beings affected by his actions.

In *The Master of the Mill*, Grove expands his portrait of the human condition socially and temporally. John Elliot's achievement ends with his death, and Abe's impact on Spalding District, too, is limited to the period of his direct influence. But in *The Master of the Mill*, the development of events is no longer linked to individual human beings. Edmund Clark dies childless. While the family has thus reached its end, its creation, the mill, remains. The Clarks have created something "withdrawn from human control" (188). In the industrialized system that they have helped to establish, the mill controls the people. Initially, this control takes the very form of the slave system in the Langholm mill (192 - 93); then it becomes more subtle by rendering human beings obsolete as at Arbala where "the mill *was* the district" (201). Sam's vision of the mill going on forever, even "were the planet to leave its orbit, . . . revolving around the sun or some other star, like a meteor through some final chaos, scattering flour dust in its interstellar wake" (319), is the complete antithesis to Grove's earlier scenarios in which all significance was limited to the extent of a human life. The individualism cherished in *A Search for America* and *Over Prairie Trails* has become obsolete in the age of the machine.

The final image of the novel is that of a wheel turning into eternity, always repeating the same course (332). Mitchell has argued that this image as well as Grove's pessimistic outlook on the future demonstrates that "Grove was influenced by [Oswald]

Spengler's essays" (75). In my view, this conclusion is somewhat misleading. Grove was aware of Spengler, but his correspondence suggests that he developed his perceptions independently of the cultural historian. Grove began to work on *The Master of the Mill* around 1928 and finished it in 1939 (c.f. *Letters*, 361).[19] Comments in his correspondence about Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (*Letters*, 424, 430) indicate that he did not read Spengler until the spring of 1943.[20] Parallels between them can be accounted for by the fact that both Grove and Spengler belonged to that generation which Gottfried Benn had characterized as thoroughly shaped by Nietzschean ideas (c.f. ch. 2). H. Stuart Hughes demonstrates the parallels between Nietzsche and Spengler by pointing out that

> Nietzsche found a measure of virtue in the recurrence of barbarism that formed his image of the future. In his lofty, mercilessly critical perspective, the restoration of a certain barbaric simplicity and honesty appeared the only means of overcoming the moral slackness of an age he unhesitatingly condemned as decadent (19).

Spengler and Grove seem to have arrived by different ways at the same conclusion. Spengler considers the histories of past civilizations; Grove the shaping forces of contemporary society. Both conclude that human civilization is inevitably deteriorating because highly developed civilizations give in to the temptations of material comfort. To satisfy material desires, human beings create tools which, as *The Master of the Mill* demonstrates emphatically, establish a power independent of human influence.

The most important lesson *The Master of the Mill* teaches is that the future is determined:

> Man was born, suffered, and died; but the mill watched over him: this mill and others. The mill was a god to him, all-good, all-provident, all-powerful. It even provided for its own procreation. . . . It had grown as the product of its own logic: it had grown out of the earth. The Clarks had been mere pigmy helpers

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[19]Grove worked on the book until 1943, but he did not alter it drastically after 1939.

[20]In the letter in which he asked for a copy of *The Decline of the West*, Grove gave a literal translation of the German title, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (*Letters*, 424). I conclude from this fact that Grove may have had some second-hand knowledge of the book, but that he had not read it. The pattern that parallels Spengler's ideas is too central to the intellectual basis of the novel to have been included only during final revisions before the book was published in 1944. Dewar's essay demonstrates that the decline of the mechanical civilization can be derived also from arguments other than Spengler's.

> in bringing it to life. Already it looked down into the valley as if it had done so for millennia. Thus it would look down forty centuries later when man had perhaps long since lost his capacity of aiding its workings: a marvel to future generations of races to whom it would be the life-giving god (328).

With the unwitting assistance of its creators, the mechanical system has become self-sufficient and is indifferent to human beings who are too weak to assert themselves against it. Dewar summarizes the consequences of Grove's vision:

> All who come into contact with the mill become enslaved to it. . . . This conclusion is inescapable in the context of the ultimate vision of Grove's work: the insignificance of man in the universe and in eternity (26).

The radical difference between Grove's philosophical position and Nietzsche's emphasis on the possibilities that the individual has of realizing the self and of becoming the master of his or her fate shows clearly in this statement from Grove's "Thoughts and Reflections":

> No occurrence, no personality is of any paramount importance; they become important if the event lies in the line which they mark. . . . That is the pragmatism of history; he is a great man whom the event aligns with itself. We say he foresaw the event and aligns himself with it. That is very rarely, if ever, the case (329).

In Grove's portrait, human beings are unavoidably caught in the avalanche of events which they had set in motion without conceiving the consequences. At this late stage of social development, human beings are nothing but the pawns of a blind fate. There does not appear to be a divine purpose in Grove's world, and human beings are too weak to establish their own purposes. The ultimate sentiment of *The Master of the Mill* is, "It [is] useless to fight the 'machine'" (260).

VIII. A Different Perspective

Shortly before his death, Grove published two works which examine the human condition from very different angles. In *Consider Her Ways*, Grove presents a view of mankind from the perspective of a tribe of highly developed ants. These ants use their superior intelligence to examine man and, in fact, conduct an existentialist inquiry into man's life on earth from a point of view which resembles that of a Nietzschean superman. *In Search of Myself*, published before but written after *Consider Her Ways*, again examines the human condition, but this time Grove uses the format of autobiography. Fact and fiction are difficult to distinguish in *In Search of Myself*, but the mixture emphasizes Grove's existentialist self-questioning which is permeated by Nietzschean concepts of self-fulfilment, self-control, and self-responsibility.

As an animal story, *Consider Her Ways* departs radically from Grove's previous works in almost every respect and at first sight does not seem to fit into Grove's oeuvre at all. Because of the unique character of *Consider Her Ways*, critics have attempted to define Grove's sources and influences. Douglas Spettigue has suggested two important sources, W.M. Wheeler's *Ants: Their Structure, Development and Behavior* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; Margaret Stobie has added a third, *The Ants of Timothy Thuemmel* by Arpad Ferenczy. My own reading of *Consider Her Ways* leads me to the conclusion that Wheeler and Swift provided models from which Grove derived inspiration, particularly for the formal aspects of the novel at various stages of its composition. I further conclude that a considerable part of the novel's intellectual content originates in Nietzschean philosophy.

In her book on Grove, Margaret Stobie points out the parallels between *Consider Her Ways* and *The Ants of Timothy Thuemmel*, a novel published in 1924 (98 - 99). These parallels are undoubtedly interesting, but they do not contribute to a better understanding of Grove's book, particularly since we have no indication that Grove was aware of Ferenczy's novel. *The Ants of Timothy Thuemmel* shows, as Stobie suggests, "the range and flexibility of ant society as the background for 'a Satire on the History of Mankind'" (98). Grove made use of this flexibility in his own novel, but whereas Ferenczy's ants resemble the allegorical animals of Orwell's *Animal Farm*, *Consider Her Ways* is significantly less allegorical; its narrative has few direct parallels to human experiences. The similarities between *Consider Her Ways* and *The Ants of Timothy Thuemmel* are due

more likely to the fact that both authors used the same sources – especially Wheeler's book and Bates's *A Naturalist on the Amazon* – and to the structural limits inherent in a tale about ants who communicate with a human being.

The importance of Wheeler's study of ants for the scientific content of *Consider Her Ways* is beyond doubt. Grove refers to the book in his novel (195), and, as Spettigue suggests, the structure of the novel's earliest draft, the "MAN" manuscript, is clearly modelled upon Wheeler's work (*Grove*, 66). For the published version of *Consider Her Ways*, however, Wheeler's *Ants* is only a source of data about ant life necessary to give the novel a degree of scientific verisimilitude.

The book we can identify most readily as a model for *Consider Her Ways* is Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, particularly its fourth part, "A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms." Spettigue discovered that Greve had translated Swift (*European Years*, 210), and Grove's ants clearly resemble Swift's horses. Both species approach life with rational control, and both comment very unfavorably upon the human race. However, at the end of *Consider Her Ways*, Grove's vision is the opposite of Gulliver's. A summary of the discrepancies reflects the philosophical concepts that permeate Grove's writing. While the rationality of the Houyhnhnms stands as an ideal throughout part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*, the Attas' insistence upon rationalist self-control is gradually undermined by the ants' actions. Wawa-quee eventually affirms the value of emotional fulfilment. Believing in the superior value of rationality, Gulliver becomes a misanthropist. Wawa-quee, however, eventually exhibits an attitude that contradicts the ideal suggested by the Attas. She turns toward a human stance, while Gulliver turns away from it after embracing the Houyhnhnms' values. Even the human charity that Gulliver experiences after having left the country of the Houyhnhnms cannot moderate his disgust at human nature as seen from the point of view of the Houyhnhnms. The portrait of human weaknesses throughout *Gulliver's Travels* creates a strong negative image of humanity which does not correspond to the increasing acceptance of human nature in *Consider Her Ways*.

While Swift's animal fable provided a model for Grove, the philosophical assumptions and pronouncements of Grove's novel suggest that a different discourse influenced the composition of *Consider Her Ways*. If we read *Consider Her Ways* in the light of Nietzschean philosophy, we shall find a source for the values debated in the novel and see that the book forms an integral part of Grove's oeuvre.

The genesis of *Consider Her Ways* provides a good example of Grove constructing fictional narrative based on socio-philosophical discourse. The first version of the novel is a manuscript, "MAN: His Habits, Social Organization, and Outlook," on which Grove worked as early as the mid-1920s (Sproxton, 35) and which has many structural parallels to Wheeler's book. Although "MAN" provides most of the theoretical material of *Consider Her Ways*, its form and tone differ considerably from the published novel. "MAN" is the synopsis of the ant expedition's scientific findings. The table of contents suggests than "MAN" is a dry sociological account of mankind (see Sproxton, 35 - 36); the tone of the manuscript is dominated by "great stretches of royal commission jargon" (Sproxton, 37).

Sproxton's summary shows that the conclusion of "MAN," like that of *Consider Her Ways*, expresses Grove's usual view of the history of human civilization:

> The outcome of the ants' study, and their judgement on man is that he must change or be exterminated. . . . The ant scholars conclude that man is so irrational a creature that cooperation with him is unlikely; nonetheless, they resolve to warn him of his perversity, and to allow him a brief time to mend his ways (38 - 39).

Two aspects of "MAN" are particularly interesting for an inquiry into the Nietzschean elements of Grove's writing. Sproxton summarizes one of Wawa-quee's central observations on the human race: "Man does not cooperate with Nature, rather he attempts to enslave her" (40). The farmers depicted in "MAN" thus oppose the cooperation which John Elliot suggests throughout *Our Daily Bread* with the words, "You can't fool the land." Elliot's attitude of course contradicts the Nietzschean concept that a person has to subdue all resisting forces, including a nature that does not yield to his will, in order to achieve self-fulfilment and happiness.

Yet another element of "MAN" shows Grove's distance from a philosophy that is based on hierarchy and egotistical struggle. The manuscript ends with a "Defense of the Human Race" by a certain R.S. Contemnour, whose name reveals the point of view he represents. Sproxton summarizes Contemnour's conclusion:

> Contemnour considers man's mission as 'divine' and that mission, he explains, 'in my humble opinion and interpretation of God's word, consists in reducing the whole world to himself'. . . . This mission can best be realized if the paragons of the race are not troubled by mundane tasks. These can be

> performed by a permanent slave class which can readily be created by having doctors mangle the skulls of poor people's children at birth (47).

The philosophy which Contemnour voices is an extreme version of Nietzsche's. The radical selfishness and the idea of using other people only for the advancement of selected individuals correspond directly to the Nietzschean concept that an aristocratic "higher type" can achieve a superhuman level of existence if it uses all possible means to enhance the self, in the process reducing other people to tools (cf. *Beyond*, 202). The drastic logic of Contemnour's arguments demonstrates the inhuman nature of this position. "The essence . . . escapes [Contemnour]. He is morally and spiritually bankrupt" (Sproxton, 48).

"MAN" was not publishable in its original form; it lacked a viable narrative point of view for Grove's fictional account of the human race. The manuscript was hampered by the fact that "the fiction and the ants soon disappear, except for some awkward footnotes, in a voluminous preaching of over two hundred typed, single-spaced pages" (Stobie, *Grove*, 99). Once Grove had found the right narrative approach and thoroughly revised the manuscript,[1] he could publish his account of the human condition.

By using the ants centrally and consistently, Grove can work with a consciousness that looks dispassionately upon the human race as an object of study. A human narrator of necessity partakes of the shortcomings criticized in the novel and would consequently not have been believable in his or her criticism. The Attas' extreme views of mankind betray, however, that the ants do not properly understand human nature. Consequently, the solutions they suggest are as inappropriate for mankind as Nietzsche's.

Wawa-quee's character is of particular interest to a Nietzschean study of Grove's writing. Wawa-quee and the Atta ants are not simply detached observers of the human race; they are observers with special qualities. We can best understand the Attas if we regard them as equivalents of the Nietzschean superman. They exhibit a significant number of traits that Nietzsche praised as contributing to a superhuman existence, and they frequently appear intellectually superior to human beings. Wawa-quee's introduction to the enterprise leaves no doubt of the ants' perspective: "It will become abundantly

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[1]Stobie suggests that Grove revised "MAN" into *Consider Her Ways* in 1933 (*Grove*, 162). This places the book chronologically after *Fruits of the Earth*, which dismisses Abe's aspirations.

clear that our own race stands at the very apex of creation as far as that creation is completed today" (5). The position that Grove has assigned to the Atta tribe of ants becomes obvious from their view of human beings:

> Man, forming part of that large division of the animal kingdom called the Mammalia, . . . occupied a somewhat unique position within that group. It was suspected . . . that his position among mammals might somewhat resemble the position of ants among insects. It had even been suggested that his development, in the past and in certain branches of his kind, had almost reached the same level as ours today; in that case he would represent that most interesting type of a retrograded or degenerate race (21).

Grove has done far more than simply reverse the positions of man and ant. On the one hand, he has devised a means of studying the human race seemingly dispassionately; on the other hand, he has created a point of view that defines itself as superhuman.

The Atta Gigantea ants, epitomized by Wawa-quee, possess a number of traits that we can identify as superhuman in Nietzsche's understanding of the term. They are superior to all other ants they encounter in size and, far more importantly, in intelligence. They possess the ability to devise and organize a great scientific expedition, and they manage to deal with all obstacles whether of natural, human, or ant origin. The mental abilities of the Attas show most clearly in Azte-ca's success in deciphering the human language (178) and in Wawa-quee's managing to read after only one hour of study (255).

Nietzschean traits are clearly evident in the Attas' attitudes. The Attas' rejection of the ant equivalent of human weaknesses is evident in Wawa-quee's early description of Assa-ree:

> There had been rumours that she was herself a 'throw-back' - an individual not entirely normal and exhibiting characteristics which aligned her with certain ancestral types of retarded development. . . . I was too profoundly penetrated with the teachings of our penologists not to feel that her extraordinary gifts might be led into channels where they would work as readily for the good of our nation as, under different circumstances, they might work for its evil (7 - 9).

In Nietzschean terms, Assa-ree is a member of the "higher type"- ranked below the superman - posing as a superman and endangering the community through her

uncontrolled ambitions.

The Attas' Nietzschean characteristics include disgust at all sexual feelings. When relating that she dropped a parthenogenetic egg, Wawa-quee repudiates herself for having "not been quite normal" (54). This emotional behavior is very unusual in the novel. Generally, Grove avoids the problem of sexual passion among the all-female ants. This trick enables him to portray a completely self-controlled race.

The same rational and anti-emotional attitude permeates all aspects of Attiine behavior. Attaching a higher value to the principle of honesty than to compassion or gratitude, Wawa-quee convinces herself of the necessity to kill the ant that has just saved the expedition by informing her of Assa-ree's plans:

> Without that treason we might at any moment have been murdered. Yet treason begets treason. Treason is not a casual act of misdemeanour. Treason is the outcome of a treasonable disposition; and a treasonable disposition deserved death (154 - 55).

Later, in the debate over Assa-ree's execution, Wawa-quee expresses the Nietzschean attitude that power justifies all actions. Her statement, "I do not call it justice. I call it expedience. . . . Justice is not a question of right but of might" (226 - 27), corresponds directly to Nietzsche's belief in power at the expense of morality.

The Attas have achieved several feats that Nietzsche proposed as the basis of a better existence. In addition to living without emotions and passions, the Attas have organized their community in a manner that approximates the Nietzschean ideal:

> Wherever life subsists at all, there ants subsist and subdue nature to their ends; the rest of creation pays them toll. To this conclusion about the fundamental dominance of ants as the lords of the animal world there is only one single exception: we Attas alone have reached a level of civilization which makes it possible for us to live self-contained lives, respecting, and not interfering with, other forms of animal life unless we are ourselves interfered with. . . . We Attas must ultimately redeem the world from the sin of predacious life. We alone are in full accord with nature's purpose; we alone, as our ancestors would have expressed it, serve the will of God (165 - 66).

Referring to the will of God as an obsolete concept, Wawa-quee echoes Nietzsche's statement, "God is dead" and, like Nietzsche, links it to the task of the higher type to live consciously and to utilize all capacities with which nature has endowed them to their own

benefit and that of others. Her conviction that her actions can and will give meaning to her existence and thus fulfill the function that her ancestors had ascribed to God parallels Nietzsche's claim that human beings have to take over the role of the deceased God. Wawa-quee's self-righteous tone echoes the conviction of the Nietzschean superior being that he acts completely in accord with his objectively best interest.

Although the ants are as close to the superhuman ideal as seems possible, Grove ascribes to them a number of traits which betray that their superhumanity is not complete. Azte-ca is able to endure the most severe physical hardships on the journey and accomplishes the feat of learning the human language, but eventually her fascination with cheap popular literature overwhelms her practical sense and causes her death. Bissa-tee is strong, wise, and loyal, but vanity leads her to carry so large a ball of hyphae that it can only be removed in a fatal operation. Even Wawa-quee, the most intelligent and disciplined Atta, has her human, or rather, formicarian, weaknesses. She not only refers several times with a clear touch of vanity to the size of her head, but she is also subject to emotions, even passions. When many scholars are run over by a car, she exclaims in desperation, "The futility of it all! The utter senselessness! . . . If such was [their] end, what, then, was the use of all antly striving?" (201). And a quasi-sexual encounter leaves, against her will, an impact on her: "Ever since Her Majesty Angza-alla-antra had revealed her tender feelings for me I had occasionally been visited by a queer sensation in my ovaries. In fact, I had not been quite normal" (54). Eventually, Wawa-quee admits that

> even science leaves us, in our lesser moments, mere formicarian beings subject to passion. For my own justification I can say that I struggled against the lower impulse which, however, proved stronger than my more elevated thought (264).

As hard as Wawa-quee may try to overcome her weaknesses, her passions are too strong even for this supposedly superformicarian creature.

The dubious character of the Attas' "superformicarian" achievements show in the events involving Assa-ree. On the surface, she seems to possess all those qualities that characterize the superior ants. She is physically very strong, of unequalled courage, a master of organization, capable of dominating others, ambitious, selfish, and impatient of control (7). But Assa-ree is an impostor. Most likely, she is not a pure Atta but a cross between Atta and Eciton (152). In Nietzschean terms, she is a character with some

superhuman traits who poses as a complete superman. In spite of her superior intelligence, Wawa-quee is unable to detect that Assa-ree is not a superformicarian Atta but an ergatogyne or a gynaecoid, the formicarian equivalent of a parvenu. The "Editor's" remark, "apparently, among ants, too, genius ranks below birth" (223), distracts the reader from the crucial question of Assa-ree's nature. Posing as a superformicarian without being one, she has seriously endangered the expedition and everyone connected with it only to satisfy her personal lust for power. In this function Assa-ree resembles Edmund Clark and Friedrich Karl Reelen. In their ruthless pursuits of power without really considering those around them, they create only harm and destruction.

Grove created the Nietzschean ants to provide an extensive critique of the human race, its mode of living, and the sorry fate toward which it seems to be headed. The novel pretends to be the account of a scientific expedition into the realm of man, and Grove fully uses this format for a number of condemnatory judgments. These are totally consistent with statements in other works; they are only more sharply formulated. Most of these judgments apply directly to human beings; some refer supposedly to other tribes of ants. In the latter case – when he discusses "authors" (113) and "capitalists" (192) – Grove has significant technical difficulties and uses rather awkward footnotes to connect the spheres of ants and human beings.

A considerable portion of *Consider Her Ways* is devoted to the ants' evaluation of human civilization and culture in terms of the Attas' mode of life. This standard, however, is questionable because of the ants' prejudices. The ants approach mankind already convinced of their own superiority and are ill-prepared to do justice to human accomplishments. More importantly, their own mode of life is out of reach for human beings, and its value to mankind appears to be very dubious. Consequently, the ants' conclusions have to be taken with much caution. While we can accept their identification of human shortcomings, their evaluations are undermined by their extreme point of view. The Attiine society is certainly not an acceptable model for human beings to imitate.

Wawa-quee's statement summarizes the ants' condemnation of mankind:

> Surely, man, as an animal endowed with reason, if reason it can be called, is a mere upstart. I would rather call him endowed with a low sort of cunning. His self-styled civilization is a mere film stretched over a horrible ground-mass of savagery (95).

In her view, the basis for man's pathetic situation is his misunderstanding of his role in nature. Rather than understanding themselves as elements within "the unity of all life" (*Myself*, 230), human beings exhibit an "innate hostility to all other forms of life other than [their] own" (134). Only the ants have managed to use nature to their ends. Although believing himself to dominate nature, in truth "man is nowhere on earth truly dominant except within his cities and his [houses]; and often not even there" (165). Not being nature's master, man obviously has to cooperate with it. But in his ignorance about his place in the world, man ranks himself higher than nature and treats it wrongly. The result is an extremely shaky balance in which man will eventually be the loser. Human beings are obviously too ignorant to realize their folly. Only Wawa-quee – through the words that Grove ascribes to her – can point it out to mankind. But the novel questions whether human beings will accept and respond to that message. Wawa-quee's conclusion about the human race is outright condemnation:

> Man has either not yet risen to any very high degree of civilization; or – which is my own opinion – . . . he has considerably degenerated from a level previously attained. . . . He is at present a degenerate type (281).

Human beings even create artificial distinctions among each other: "one fact [is] beyond doubt, namely, that man's whole social organization is built upon at least the ideal of a strict division of castes" (278). The example of the Polyergus ants, which Grove uses to represent the "capitalists" (192), demonstrates the futility of such a social division. The elite becomes dependent on slaves, while at the same time the enslavement makes it impossible for the others ever to rise above their current state. The inevitable result of such a configuration is a social degeneration evident in all aspects of human civilization:

> Man does not strive after knowledge for the sake of knowledge; he strives after it for the sake of increasing his power. Ants, who have long since abandoned that aim, seeing clearly that material progress – which means no more and no less than the increase of power for the achievement of material ends – would side-track them in their essential task which was to live this life of theirs fully – ants could never be satisfied with so low an aim; and that for the very reason that they see themselves as thinking, exploring, feeling, and reasoning beings – not as slaves of material ends (168 – 69).

The human beings that Wawa-quee encounters are so strongly addicted to material ends that no change seems possible. Man's whole social system is based upon

the pursuit of material gain:

> Man has a way of enslaving his fellow-man by means of a thing of which we read much - a thing he calls money and which some have and others have not. . . . It is a cruel thing, since its lack condemns to abject slavery or actual want; whereas its possession confers the highest privileges (280 - 81).

Wawa-quee claims to be ignorant about the function of money, but Grove provides a graphic illustration of its effects on human behavior several chapters earlier. The "perfume of royal favour" affects only ants, but by calling that perfume "money," Grove satirizes the human response to money:

> [The ant] will ignore all other scents but this single one; it she will follow no matter where it leads; for it seems to promise power and everlasting satisfaction of all desires; and this satisfaction appears suddenly as a veritable heaven on earth. She has, from that moment on, no other desire than to inhale this money. Nothing will hold her back; no consideration of honour; no love of kind; no sense of formicarian dignity. Have it she must should it lead to her death (160 - 61).

A society so obsessed with the pursuit of wealth certainly cannot devote itself to higher, spiritual aims. Such a society seems destined to deteriorate, making the realization of spiritual ideals less and less possible. Echoing Grove's idealization of agricultural life, Wawa-quee claims that man's degeneration shows in his abandoning of agriculture, the highest mode of life (205).

Grove repeatedly expresses criticism of mankind not only by relating Wawa-quee's observations about human beings, but also by ascribing obviously human traits to different tribes of ants. He confuses the satire further by attacking both mankind in general and specific aspects of society that have helped to frustrate his own artistic career in Canada. Stobie has pointed out the extent to which, in parts of *Consider Her Ways*, Grove draws "a loose analogy with his own life leading up to and away from Ottawa" (*Grove*. 165).[2] The most personal - and most touching - of these attacks is a

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[2]The most obvious of these parallels is the scene in which a man named Ayr attempts to crush Wawa-quee. Her desire to hand him over "to the everlasting condemnation of antkind" (246) is Grove's emotional response to the critic Robert Ayre who had questioned Grove's ability as a novelist: "His language hampers him. . . . He talks about his characters in stilted phrases and featureless cliches . . . and he stuffs stilted language like oatmeal into their mouths. . . . Pedantry keeps Grove down. Thick, dead words. Life lies buried under them"

satiric invective about the fates of authors – supposedly among the Myrmecocysts but in truth, of course, among human beings (111 – 17). In Wawa-quee's account, any aspiring artist has to expect a life full of frustrations:

> Authors were held in great esteem in the commonwealth; that is to say, they were ostentatiously honoured and secretly despised as unnecessary and unproductive members of society; . . . the honour given them freely when they were dead was withheld from them during life; and they had to be at the beck and call of even the humblest of their fellow ants who, no matter how excellent the honey they furnished might be, thought themselves entitled to nag at the food they received; and that in the exactly inverse ratio of their qualifications as judges (114 – 16).

In short, authors experience nothing but frustration, non-appreciation, and criticism from an audience too ignorant to judge properly. But, unlike the human author Frederick Philip Grove, the ant-authors at least live among beings with whom they can communicate.[3] Wawa-quee's evaluation of the lives of the authors summarizes a tragic situation:

> I do not know of anything that we met with in the whole course of our travels which deserved greater admiration than the selfless devotion of these authors who persist in devoting their lives to an unattainable ideal, in the face of going without the common pleasures of life (117).

The paragraph quoted above captures the essence of Grove's picture of his own career in *In Search of Myself*. Publishing this evaluation a year after describing his own struggles, Grove emphasizes the tragic heroism of his own striving. Wawa-quee comments ironically that the audience – mankind – is too unsophisticated to appreciate the task of the authors who live on a spiritual plane above that of the masses. Unfortunately, many of Grove's allusions are lost on readers not intimately familiar with the details of Grove's

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[2](cont'd) (255). Unimportant as the scene is in the novel, its vehemence suggests that Grove wrote it shortly after Ayre's essay was published in April 1932.

[3]Grove's description of the ant-authors and their lives adds an interesting facet to *Consider Her Ways*: "For month after month, and for year after year they . . . have to remain suspended above the common herd, unable to take part in their pleasures and diversions except as lookers-on; debarred from all friendly and intimate intercourse, forbidden even to converse with their fellow authors" (116). This view of the artist represents the sentiments of Felix Paul Greve's essay, "Flauberts Theorien ueber das Kuenstlertum" from 1904, and is also almost identical with the view that Thomas Mann expressed in "Tonio Kroeger." See chapter two of this thesis for the Nietzschean basis of Mann's story.

career. Eventually, some of the satire is little more than a private joke.

Consider Her Ways criticizes mankind from a unique point of view, but overall the novel is a failure, since Grove is unable to handle the intricacies of his satire. He confuses the reader by attacking human shortcomings in human beings as well as in ants. Also, he includes obscure personal references and invectives. Furthermore, Grove is unable to resist playing with the effects of using an ant as narrator. He also takes away from the impact of the satire by weighing down the narrative with excessive factual information about ants.

Consider Her Ways is useful for this study because it shows Grove creating protagonists who incorporate many Nietzschean traits. In addition, Grove's portrait of the ants' attitudes is highly evaluative. The picture of the Attas' life that evolves from Wawa-quee's account is far from appealing. Positive human values such as altruism and emotional satisfaction are concepts alien to this world. The final chapter of the novel demonstrates that their lack is a very serious shortcoming of this supposedly perfect society. *Consider Her Ways* thus continues Grove's positive emphasis on the humanitarian characteristics which inform the second half of *Fruits of the Earth*.

Grove's last published novel rejects the value of superhuman traits altogether. Whatever positive results the quest for a superior existence may have, they are nullified by the suffering which this quest causes. Wawa-quee's behavior toward her own subjects as well as toward other tribes of ants demonstrates the dangers that may arise out of her attitude. As Middlebro states, "one who accepts violence must accept the moral responsibility for its use" (57). Moral considerations, so totally lacking in Nietzschean thought, are a highly significant criterion in Grove's later books where no individual progress made at the expense of society is ever justifiable. Expressing a belief in "the unity of all life" (*Myself*, 230), Grove condemns in *Consider Her Ways* a hierarchical system of thought which dismisses the lower ranks. In Grove's novels, the lives and perspectives of ordinary people increasingly become the measure of good and evil. In contrast to the hope in Nietzschean philosophy which he expressed in *Wanderungen*, Grove eventually shows in his works that a philosophy which advocates the pursuit of a superhuman existence is inappropriate to the human condition.

Consider Her Ways ends on a very revealing note. Returning home from their long and dangerous journey into the world of man, Wawa-quee and Bissa-tee, the outstanding superhuman Attas, become human. In the last chapter, the two remaining ants exhibit

more human traits than any of Grove's human protagonists. Wawa-quee's admissions that she is "longing for comfort and companionship, longing for Bissa-tee to come and make up" (285) and that she "could have wept" (289) make this supposedly dispassionate and self-controlled being far more acceptable from a human point of view than characters such as Abe Spalding, Niels Lindstedt, and particularly Edmund Clark.

The last chapter of *Consider Her Ways* completely discredits the idea that overcoming one's passions and realizing one's will to power can bring happiness. What matters most to Wawa-quee after an arduous journey of thousands of kilometers taking almost ten years is the loss of her friend, not the actual scientific achievement. Finally, in clear contradiction to all Attiine and Nietzschean ideals, Wawa-quee's heart is more important to her than her rational will. In the final consequence, Wawa-quee's discovery of her heart is more important than any findings that support the Attas' claim to being the crown of creation. The drive for power - of such predominant importance in the Nietzschean view of the world - gives way to emotions.

Having analyzed the workings of contemporary society in *The Master of the Mill* and having subjected human nature to an examination in *Consider Her Ways*, Grove concludes his oeuvre by returning to his initial concerns in a consideration of the individual. *In Search of Myself*, composed last among Grove's published manuscripts, is a fictionalized account of his North American experience and examines the validity of the principles according to which he had attempted to find happiness and fulfilment in the young North American society.

Considering the conclusions of his later novels - *Fruits of the Earth, Two Generations, The Master of the Mill,* and *Consider Her Ways* - we would expect to find a humanistic point of view in the book. At a first glance, this expectation seems fulfilled, but a closer reading of *In Search of Myself* reveals that Grove contradicts his earlier conclusions. In fact, Grove analyzes his personal achievements and failures from a point of view that incorporates important Nietzschean concepts of self-discipline and self-responsibility.

In Search of Myself is permeated by a strong sense of failure. Writing in 1938 - 40 (Stobie, *Grove*, 176), Grove concludes that he has not achieved any of his goals. In one of his earlier essays, "Apologia pro vita et opere suo" of 1931, he sounds confident about his future as artist in Canada. Although he laments the shallowness of contemporary

culture and the impediments it creates for serious artists such as himself, Grove expresses a basic confidence in his ability to fulfill his perceived task. Seeing himself caught in the conflict between artistic creativity and practical life, he declares that the latter makes him "a stunted growth, starved by a relentless struggle for the daily bread, of intellectual food and of leisure" (420). What really matters to him, he states, is to create good and serious art. With extreme self-confidence - which is surprising if we consider the rather moderate success he had except for a brief period in 1927/28 - he claims: "I aim at building the sort of work which, while like the pyramids, taking time to build, will also stand for some little time after being completed" (420). Whatever may happen to him, Grove asserts in 1931, his art will justify all hardship: "Failure may be tragic; but we [artists] do not shrink from tragedy" (421).

Conversely, *In Search of Myself* admits Grove's defeat. In our reading of *In Search of Myself* we have to remember that while pretending to be an autobiography, the book greatly transcends the vague restrictions about dealing with factual truth commonly associated with autobiographical writing. As Hjartarson explains,

> An autobiographer attempts to articulate his own vision of himself at the time of writing, of who he is and of how the events of his life have shaped his development. What the autobiography offers, consequently, is not the historical facts, but the autobiographer's vision of himself. . . . We continually reshape our past in accordance with our changing understanding of ourselves ("Design and Truth," 76).

Although we know that any autobiography is a teleological construct, we nevertheless expect the autobiographer not to lie. Grove, however, mixes fact and fiction, giving his audience no possibility to distinguish between the two. The position of his book between different genres allows Grove to ascribe to his characters whatever actions and motives he considers appropriate, and in *In Search of Myself* he uses his margins to the fullest extent. Knowing that his audience has no means of divining the truth about the first thirty years of his life, Grove rearranges his past to emphasize his failure in Canada. By idealizinghiis European background, Grove presents himself as a figure of extreme promise who betrays his potential because the external circumstances of his life overwhelm him. This tactic heightens the drama of his failure, and, more importantly, it absolves him of responsibility. Read from this point of view, *In Search of Myself* is little more than a self-pitying lament about the unfairness of the world.

We can, however, read *In Search of Myself* in very different terms. One aspect of the book permits us to see a completely different attitude in Grove's review of his life. As Alexandra Collins has noted, "Grove . . . has little interest in the world outside himself, referring only occasionally to historical events or to other people in his life" (182). This focus on the self, which shaped Grove's novels up to *Fruits of the Earth*, parallels the Nietzschean fixation upon the self. Even though Grove had rejected Nietzschean ideals and recommendations by the time that he wrote *In Search of Myself*, Nietzschean perceptions of ambition and success still had a significant influence on his thinking.

If we read *In Search of Myself* from a Nietzschean perspective, we evaluate Grove's explanation of his failure very differently, since Nietzsche forces the individual to accuse himself of his shortcomings instead of permitting him to pity himself. Grove then becomes completely responsible to himself for every aspect of his life, for every action he takes and every decision he makes. The Nietzschean perspective does not permit the excuse that the circumstances prevented success. Instead, it accuses the individual of not having accumulated sufficient power for his enterprise. Seen from this angle, *In Search of Myself* becomes Grove's account of his inability to utilize his potential. Different as the reality of his European background was from the one he ascribes to himself, it still provided him with an education and a cultural horizon far above that of most of his Canadian contemporaries.[4] In *In Search of Myself* as well as in *It Needs to Be Said* and other essays, Grove presents himself as an author called upon to express the experiences of special people, to deal with topics of universal tragic dimensions, to establish literary realism, and to see his name put side by side with masters such as Tolstoi, Ibsen, and Hardy. In his own opinion, the Felix Paul Greve who has recreated himself as Frederick Philip Grove appears capable of all these accomplishments.

The Frederick Philip Grove who writes *In Search of Myself* realizes that he has failed to achieve any of these goals. Although the reason for his failure seems to lie in external circumstances, this excuse becomes invalid in a Nietzschean interpretation. The Nietzschean concept of existence renders him guilty of submitting to these circumstances. At what may be the end of his writing life, Grove realizes that he has compromised his desire to realize himself through art with his desire for public fame, material ease, and a family life. Trying to serve too many masters – his artistic ambition, his emotional and

[4]This perception is not Grove's alone. Douglas Spettigue asserts that "Grove did stand head and shoulders, intellectually, above his peers" (*Grove*, 140).

physical needs – he becomes guilty of doing justice to none, least of all to the most important one, his artistry.

This strong sense of having betrayed his artistic potential explains the desire to break away from this kind of life. At the conclusion of the book, Grove speculates,

> Suppose I went out on the road once more, leaving wife and child? . . . I could see myself sitting by the roadside, jotting down thoughts or imaginations that have come to me. I should taste once more the triumph of creation, the utter triumphs of the pangs of birth; and I should *grow* inwardly as nothing can make a man grow except the vicarious living of scores of other lives. But, after all, there are things which a man does not do (457).

This dream is, to a certain extent, the same one that Niels Lindstedt and Abe Spalding have when they are faced with the futile lives they have created for themselves. And it is, of course, a reappearance of that vision which had contributed to Felix Paul Greve's decision to to create his new identity in North America and which had been a fundamental concern in *A Search for America*. But, and this is the ultimate failure in Grove's life, he sees himself as having delayed too long. By the time that he writes *In Search of Myself*, he has become too old and too dependent upon others to break away one more time. He may have learned where he erred in his approach to life and where he made wrong decisions, but he can no longer cast himself into the role of the newcomer to the new world who tries to establish himself on his own terms. Self-sufficient characters such as Phil Branden and the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* are no longer realistic models for Grove to follow in his pursuit of self-realization. In *The Master of the Mill*, Grove has Sam Clark say, "None of us can live unless we stand justified in our own eyes" (197). The author of *In Search of Myself* attempts to justify the life of Frederick Philip Grove to himself. He concludes with a strong dissatisfaction, arguing in a Nietzschean manner that he is to blame for most of what he let happen to himself.

From a Nietzschean point of view, the reading of *In Search of Myself* which blames Grove's failure on external circumstances turns the book into a masterpiece of self-deception. In a Nietzschean interpretation, the blame for Grove's failure lies not in the unfavorable circumstances of his writing life in Canada but rather in his being too weak to rise above these circumstances. As Collins argues, the pattern of Grove's reasoning is exemplified by the episode of the boat trip: "Grove establishes a goal, uses reason to chart a course, defies morality to get what he wants, and then finds the odds

against his success are so overwhelming that he must retreat" (185). In a Nietzschean interpretation, such reasoning does not hold. Being completely responsible for himself, Grove should have prepared himself better for his enterprise, emulating the manner in which the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* fights the forces of nature. From this point of view, only Grove himself is responsible for not using to the fullest extent the possibilities open to him after he had started a new life in North America.

Since *In Search of Myself* can be interpreted readily from two very different philosophical angles, the book is the supreme example of Grove's ability to mislead the public. Janet Giltrow has aptly summarized the consequences of Grove's method:

> Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this web of subterfuge is the credulity of Grove's Canadian audience; by exploiting the informational conventions of travel narrative, Grove was accepted as the man he wanted to be. He created credentials for himself (96).

He manages to distort the truth and to create a public image which turns his failure into an attack against his perceived opponents. Instead of publically facing his own shortcomings, Grove turns defense into attack and assails the cultural climate of Canada which he had already labelled "a non-conductor for any sort of intellectual current" several years earlier ("Plight," 460). The culprit thus appears as the victim. Instead of emerging as a man too weak to realize his ambitions, Grove now appears as someone who possesses all the qualifications necessary to achieve his goals but who has been tragically thwarted by an uncomprehending environment. The question has to remain unanswered whether Grove is aware that this Nietzschean element contributes so strongly to his perspective. But whatever the answer may be, the existence – whether designed or unconsciously included – of this perspective in *In Search of Myself* indicates the importance of Nietzschean ideas for Grove's thought even at this late phase of his life.

With the publication of *In Search of Myself*, Grove concludes his inquiry into the possibilities of self-fulfilment in Canada. In his numerous fictional characters, he presents a considerable range of approaches to life. Some of these approaches parallel, as we have seen, Nietzsche's suggestions for self-fulfilment. With the exception of the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails*, all of Grove's characters who adopt attitudes similar to those of

Nietzsche either discard their attitude or fail because of that attitude.[5] At the end of Grove's life, the Nietzschean philosophy that Felix Paul Greve had praised in his poetry as a way to gain satisfaction and happiness in life stands as a system of thought completely inappropriate for human beings. But even though Grove rejects Nietzschean conclusions, Nietzschean patterns of thought figure prominently in his thinking and writing.

[5]The narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* fails as well in his pursuit, but as I argued in chapter four, the failure may be due less to flaws in the philosophy than to the protagonist's inability to live by that philosophy.

IX. Conclusion

Frederick Philip Grove stressed in several of his essays, particularly "Apologia pro vita et opere suo" and "The Plight of Canadian Fiction? – A Reply," that he considered his works vastly superior to any other literature produced in Canada. Walter Pache even ascribes to him the belief "that he had created Canadian literature anew with a single stroke."[1] However, most critics concerned with Canadian literary history are reluctant to give a prominent role to Grove. In their opinion, his stylistic weaknesses and his frequently unconvincing plots and characterizations make Grove a dubious candidate for the honor of being counted among Canada's most important novelists. There are, however, exceptions to this evaluation. In one of his books, George Woodcock puts Frederick Philip Grove, together with Hugh MacLennan, in very illustrious company.

> Because of the nature of the task he has set himself – the fictional delineation of a nation's odyssey – MacLennan assumes a largeness (which is not necessarily the same as greatness) of a kind rivalled in Canada only by another common man tortured by the immanence of genius, Frederick Philip Grove. It is the same kind of largeness as characterized the great Russian novelists, and if neither MacLennan nor Grove has produced a work to compare even distantly with *War and Peace*, they have both been touched with the sense of space and history, and of man in relation to both, that characterizes Tolstoy (*MacLennan*, 1 – 2).

Woodcock's evaluation differs from that of readers who concentrate on the undeniable shortcomings of individual works. Woodcock's different position is due to the fact that he bases his evaluation on Grove's entire Canadian oeuvre.[2]

Seen as a whole, Grove's oeuvre constitutes an inquiry into the conditions of human life on earth. Grove conducted his inquiry over a period of forty-five years during which, as we have seen, the Nietzschean approach to reality figured prominently in his thinking. Grove's developing oeuvre eventually arrives at a philosophical position quite removed from the one we find in the German works.

Grove had several concerns in his fictions, such as the settlement of the prairie, the relationship of the sexes, the conflicts between the generations, and the significance of

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[1]"Mit einem Schlag die kanadische Literatur neu geschaffen zu haben" ("Fall Grove," 128). (My translation).

[2]When Woodcock's book was published in 1969, Grove's German past was not yet known.

mechanization. His presentation of these topics shows numerous clear traces of the Nietzschean approach to life which suggests unique answers to basic questions of existence. However, Grove's whole oeuvre shows that human life and experience are irreconcilable with the advice given by Nietzsche. Grove's protagonists suffer from the confusion and misery that ensues when people behave according to standards in a human environment for which these standards are completely inappropriate. Grove did not proceed systematically and had other intentions in mind as well, but the constant presence of Nietzschean elements throughout his oeuvre indicates how important Nietzsche was for Grove's thought.

Considered individually and as works of art, Grove's novels are frequently flawed and unsatisfying. Grove was, in Edward McCourt's words, "not a great novelist, for the power to create living people was denied him" (69). With the exception of *The Master of the Mill*, Grove is also no master of narrative technique. These basic shortcomings impede the recognition of the philosophical basis of Grove's work. His philosophical concerns are, however, Grove's most significant contribution to Canadian letters.

Two of Grove's essays on literature give the artist a role which parallels the one Grove ascribed to the protagonists of his novels. Grove's views are certainly not original, but they deserve our consideration since they shed an important light on his self-perception. Grove sees the artist as central to his creations and declares art capable of contributing to the general well-being of mankind. His statements in "A Writer's Classification of Writers and Their Work" and "Morality in the Forsyte Saga" proclaim the main purpose of literature to be providing the readers with insights about life. Grove proclaims affirmatively that art can and must contribute to the creation of a general understanding of human beings and their existence on earth:

> By a long and painful process, by no means ended, a good many men have come to see a common substratum of humanity in all of their brethren: and in this process art has played a far from subordinate part. . . . It is one of the functions of art to break through that barrier [of individuality] and to make us understand: to show up that common background of humanity. . . . It is the artist's task to understand and to make us understand ("Writer's Classification," 242).

Grove thus professes a belief in the educative function of art. While a work of art may not teach a straightforward lesson, it can, ideally, provide insights into the human

condition from which the readers can draw their own conclusions. The artist's function is to present these insights as truthfully as possible:

> The artist has received a revelation. He has *seen*. . . . That sight he wants to perpetuate. No matter how accurately he tries to reproduce what *he* saw, he may fail to force the public to see it *as* he saw it. That may or may not be the fault of his method of reproduction. It may also be the fault of the public's lack of accurate or painstaking vision. . . . There is only one thing the artist must focus his mind upon; and that is the revelation he has received ("Morality," 56 - 57).

In Grove's perception, the task of communicating a universal truth to other people is impeded by the undeniable factor of individual perception: "Above all, every human being sees the human world surrounding him in the perspective of his own experience of life" ("Writer's Classification," 241). The author is thus caught in a dilemma. The ultimate objective of art is to convey universal insights about life, but to gain such insights the artist has to become an observer external to life: "In order that art may live, the artist must, at least temporarily, die to life" ("Writer's Classification," 250). Here Grove seems to reaffirm a position he had already proclaimed in his essay on Flaubert in 1904: "The artist is as unable to live in life as is the coral creature unable to live on land" (10).[3] But by 1932, Grove has realized that a separation of artistic existence and normal life is not possible in such an absolute form:

> Where . . . man becomes a creator in an artistic sense . . . the trouble is that he himself forms at least one of the elements out of which he creates: in fact, every single element which he uses (be it an element of sensation, emotion, or pure observation) assumes, in art, its significance only by that relation to the central ego which gathers them and recombines them, tinged by that admixture of itself ("Writer's Classification," 247).
>
> No true artist of the first order will ever emphasize his own individuality; it will pervade his work in spite of himself ("Writer's Classification," 243).

We would be wrong if we understood Grove here as regarding all writing as autobiographical. What Grove sees great writers put into their works are not the facts of their lives but rather their insights - the "revelations" - into the constitution of the world

[3]"[Der Kuenstler] kann so wenig im Leben leben, wie das Korallentierchen auf dem Lande" ("Flauberts Theorien").

and into the human condition:

> The strong personality, the one that, in his life, aims at nothing less than a complete conquest of the outside world and of himself: the objective, highly disciplined, much embracing personality (Goethe, Shakespeare) will produce work the value of which is almost directly proportional to the degree in which his own intensely human and subjective nature penetrates it, perhaps in spite of himself. It takes very intense emotions to stir such personalities to their depths so that they surrender themselves to that fusion [with their characters]. But once they are stirred . . . they succeed in revealing to us lesser men hidden potentialities by enforcing in us a fusion of ourselves with their own *'Erlebnis'* (a Goethean word so charged with Goethean meaning that it has become untranslatable by the colourless English word experience) ("Writer's Classification," 249 – 50).

Grove's statement is remarkably similar to the following, posthumously published, aphorism by Nietzsche: "'I speak' because I have seen. Now I have to be all mouth: because recently I was all eye and innocent mirror. Thus speaks the artist."[4]

Grove gives the author complete freedom with regard to the means with which he pursues his enterprise: "It is clearly the novelist's privilege to cast his picture of human experience within the mould of any convention, even a hypothetical one" ("Morality," 60). Grove dismisses even moral limits as arbitrary: "Morals are merely – a system of ethics is merely – a device used by fallible men to follow a tradition" ("Morality," 59). Morals, Grove argues, receive their authority from the society in which they are prevalent. This society itself may, however, be misled and not "promote the fulness of life" ("Morality," 59) that Grove sees as the true function of morals. Grove is thus as sceptical of traditional moral concepts as Nietzsche had been. Grove's reasons and intentions, however, are very different from the philosopher's.

Throughout his oeuvre Grove was concerned with trying to find the system of ethics, the philosophy, appropriate for the society of which he was a part. Living in an age in which traditionally accepted social and moral norms had been seriously undermined, Grove had to find a suitable approach to life on his own. Like so many of

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[4]"'Ich rede': denn ich sah. Nun muss ich ganz Mund sein: denn juengst war ich ganz Auge und Unschuld des Spiegels. So spricht der Kuenstler" (14: 82). My translation.

his European contemporaries, he was attracted to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche which presents itself as a clear alternative to traditional ethical concepts. Nietzsche's proclamations about the possibility of overcoming the miseries of life and replacing them with a glorious superhuman alternative appealed to many people disenchanted with their society, particularly with its intellectual and artistic life. The Nietzschean emphasis on the individual path to a better existence provided optimism and incentive for people dissatisfied with their lives. Other systems of thought popular at the time saw the individual as the helpless object of external forces, either those of God or, an explanation more popular at the time, those of heritage and social environment. In contrast to these explanations, which easily lead to resignation, Nietzsche advocates a salvation which the individual can achieve through his own striving. If he pursues his interests stringently enough and does not allow any weaknesses to interfere, the individual can, according to Nietzsche, find happiness and satisfaction in self-fulfilment.

Frederick Philip Grove's German writings demonstrate that he was one of the many members of his generation attracted to the Nietzschean vision of the path to happiness. He eventually rejected the belief that the overcoming of the passions and the realization of the will to power can lead to human happiness.

Nietzschean concepts continued to be present in Grove's writing, but they are frequently difficult to identify. Nietzschean philosophy itself is fragmented and even self-contradictory in parts. The ongoing debate among scholars of philosophy demonstrates that, 100 years after Nietzsche ceased to write, even the experts are not agreed on several of his tenets.[5] Grove, however, was not a scholar of philosophy. Like many of his contemporaries, he apparently read Nietzsche with more enthusiasm than understanding and created his own version of Nietzsche's philosophy. Grove's concern with Nietzschean concepts is made even more problematic by the fact that he did not write philosophical essays but fiction. Plots and characterizations put an additional source of distortion between original philosophy and published novel. The nature of Grove's ongoing concern with Nietzschean values in his books is best understood through Hans-Robert Jauss' concept of creative reception:

> In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history. . . . The

[5]See the debate about eternal recurrence referred to in ch. 2.

> historicity of literature as well as its communicative character presupposes a dialogical and at once processlike relationship between work, audience, and new work that can be conceived in the relations between message and receiver as well as between question and answer, problem and solution (19).[6]

The discrepancy between Grove's ambition as a writer and his lack of success with his audience parallels the failure that those of Grove's fictional characters experience who approach their perceived tasks in life with an attitude that is compatible with Nietzschean concepts. His early statements about his artistic ambitions suggest that Grove was as convinced of being able to reach literary heights as Abe Spalding is of being able to build his farm. Like Spalding, Grove is ultimately unsuccessful and fails to gain satisfaction from his grandiose enterprise which is supposed to justify his own life as well as the burden he places on his family (c.f. *Myself*, 358). Yet until the very end, Grove seems to have believed that his ambition was realistic, that he could have become an outstanding novelist if he had been more disciplined and the circumstances had been more favorable. He never appears to question whether realizing that ambition was within his reach. In my opinion, Grove's insistence on being able to reach his goals reflects the fact that a part of his thinking was strongly influenced by Nietzsche who proclaimed that a person can reach any goal if he prepares himself sufficiently for his task. Following Nietzsche's line of reasoning, Grove accuses himself of having dissipated his energies instead of concentrating them on his most worthy task, his art.

Grove encountered Nietzschean philosophy as a young man in Germany at the turn of the century when many artists and intellectuals looked to Nietzsche for

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[6]As a result of this insight, we have to alter our perception of the creative process. Instead of considering a work of literature as existing in a creative sphere of its own, we have to regard it as partially a response to previous literature, generally to work by a different author. As a creative response, the new work is intended to "solve formal and moral problems left behind by the last work, and [to] present new problems in turn" (Jauss, 32). Creative reception is thus not imitation of a model, but rather the attempt to develop it further. A good illustration of this principle can be found in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, which was initially intended as a satiric reply to Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* but then far exceeded that objective. For a more detailed application to works of literature of the concept of creative reception see these essays by Hans-Robert Jauss: "Goethe's and Valery's *Faust*: On the Hermeneutics of Question and Answer," *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 110 - 38; "Racines und Goethes *Iphigenie* - Mit einem Nachwort ueber die Partialitaet der rezeptionsaesthetischen Methode," *Rezeptionsaesthetik: Theorie und Praxis*, ed. Rainer Warning, 353 - 400.

inspiration. *Wanderungen* shows that the young Felix Paul Greve, too, was an admirer of Nietzsche, but the ambiguous portrait of Friedrich Karl Reelen in *Fanny Essler* questions some of Nietzsche's values. While his self-control and forcefulness make Reelen appear to have realized his ambitions, his emotional coldness and total self-centeredness alienate him from protagonists and readers for whom human emotions are essential elements of life. Fanny's perspective condemns his attitude which prevents him from taking part in very important human interaction.

Grove's Canadian oeuvre repeatedly shows that attitudes compatible with the Nietzschean path to self-fulfilment cause misery by obstructing normal human relationships. In every book, from *Over Prairie Trails* to *Consider Her Ways*, at least one character attempts to find happiness in a manner very similar to the ideas Nietzsche had proposed.

Phil Branden and the narrator of *Over Prairie Trails* have to learn that they are not the complete masters of their existence. As much as they strive for total independence, they are human beings who have desires for communication and comfort impossible to realize through the Nietzschean stress on egotism and conflict.

Niels Lindstedt cannot overcome his passions by a simple act of will. *Settlers of the Marsh* shows that passions are such a central element of human life that to suppress them causes nothing but misery. Grove reinforces this insight in *The Yoke of Life* where he combines it with another Nietzschean factor, the will to power. The destructive effects of Len Sterner's unbalanced psyche are made even worse by his insistence upon his will to realize himself regardless of the consequences that this ambition has for others. These two novels make clear that passions have to be accepted and dealt with properly in the human environment in which we live.

The will to power, which Nietzsche considered the key to self-fulfilment, is the source of frustration and failure in Grove's other novels with human protagonists. Selfish insistence upon the will to power alienates other people who invariably are a part of that vision which the will to power projects as goal. Only Abe Spalding and Ralph Patterson are eventually able to achieve a degree of emotional satisfaction after they have realized the folly of egotism and come to understand the importance of accepting other people and their aspirations. This satisfaction is small, but it is infinitely more fulfilling than the material power which they had initially believed to be a source of happiness. Grove's characters gain satisfaction only by understanding that happiness arises out of human

interaction.

The futility of the individualist striving for power at the expense of emotional fulfilment is most clearly evident in *The Master of the Mill*. In the world that Grove portrays in his most ambitious novel, human beings are ultimately powerless. This world is dominated by superhistorical forces so powerful that nothing can successfully oppose them. Any attempt to do so inevitably leads to defeat and destruction. Nietzschean suggestions for the path to happiness are thus totally inappropriate. In this world, human beings can achieve happiness only through emotional satisfaction that alleviates the pressures of those superhistorical forces. *The Master of the Mill* shows that the only way of life that does not cause harm and destruction is one that embraces human values.

With his last published novel, *Consider Her Ways*, Grove goes, in a way, back to his beginnings. In the "Irrfahrt" poem of *Wanderungen*, the quester for a higher mode of existence is rejected by the superhuman spirit because he is motivated by human vanity. But the speaker persists in his ambition. *Consider Her Ways* reverses the values proposed in "Irrfahrt." From her superhuman point of view, Wawa-quee tells her audience that human beings are too far away from the superhuman mode of life ever to reach it. But, more importantly, *Consider Her Ways* makes clear that such a state of existence is not worth striving for. The novel's last chapter shows that discipline, intelligence, and self-determination are no substitute for emotional fulfilment.

Grove's novels indicate the various stages of his search for a satisfying approach to existence. Spettigue's consideration of the last, unfinished, manuscript Grove worked on, "The Seasons," suggests that eventually Grove rejected the idea that any system of thought can serve as a satisfactory means to overcome the apparent futility of one's existence:

> Grove's answer, in short, to the fact of futility is action. Just as Arnold Brewster agrees to lead the farmers' revolt, knowing that he and they will lose, so modern man must not only accept the futility of life but must also deny it. 'It is one of my aims,' Brewster says, 'to make people see that to make life livable is a responsibility which rests on our shoulders, not on those of a mythical god.' The great threat of materialism is that it leads to shallowness, to absorption in trivialities; the danger in supernaturalism is that it encourages avoidance of the very issues man must face if he ever is to ameliorate his own tragic lot (*Grove*, 144).

The only approach to life that can promise any success, Grove seems to imply, is to encounter life without filtering one's response through a preconceived concept which defines right and wrong. Accepting individual experience as the basis for one's life appears to be the conclusion at which Grove arrived after spending over forty years seeking for such a guideline. In his "Thoughts and Reflections," Grove summarizes his conviction that life cannot be lived properly by following a model:

> Among my few acquaintances, the only thing said that struck me at all as worth recording was the question why I did not set down any idea of the ideal man. . . . I replied that figures in fiction conform as little to formulas as figures in life (302).

This conclusion is, of course, existentialist. The existentialist element in Grove's writing has been recognized before, but it has not yet been used in an interpretation of Grove's works. In his essay on "Grove and Existentialism," Frank Birbalsingh points out the general existentialist note in Grove's writing:

> In stressing the pre-eminence of personal values, Grove's novels in fact counteract the naturalistic overtones which some have found in his writing. . . . Passionate support for individual integrity and unyielding belief in the sovereignty of fundamental spiritual values derive from a wider if not deeper philosophical outlook that is neither socialist nor naturalist but existentialist (70).

Unfortunately, Birbalsingh does not proceed to apply this insight to a detailed study of Grove's works. Instead, he labels Grove's existentialist views important but "inchoate and stunted" (72) and concentrates on "irrepressible tensions" (73) in Grove's psyche for which the novels were supposedly an outlet.[7] Since there is no way of verifying these

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[7]Birbalsingh's conclusion about Grove – "his purely artistic intention, namely to represent a view of life that is basically existentialist, is corrupted by an extra-literary motive, that of fulfilling wholly personal psychological needs and expectations" (75 – 76) – turns out to be his own undoing. Regarding the characters merely as symbols of Grove's psychological problems forces Birbalsingh to base his interpretations on speculations about Grove's psyche. Thus he creates, in Eric Thompson's words, "a morass of murky speculations that have little to do with evaluating Grove's achievement as a serious novelist" (16). Birbalsingh's essay did not have a significant impact on Grove scholarship also for another reason. Birbalsingh's strong emphasis on Grove's biography and his acceptance of *In Search of Myself* as the factual truth became a very dubious basis for interpretation when the questionable status of all previous assertions about Grove's life became clear through Douglas Spettigue's discovery of the

speculations, critics have generally dismissed Birbalsingh's essay. Unfortunately, Birbalsingh's valuable insights into the existentialist elements of Grove's writing were discarded together with his other, and questionable, interpretations.

As the preceding study has shown, existentialist elements form a significant element of Grove's oeuvre. The source of this existentialism is Grove's reading of the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's influence is so pervasive that we can consider him the most important of the many thinkers who influenced Grove throughout his life. Having come to this conclusion, we can put into perspective Douglas Spettigue's suggestion that the most important influences on Grove were Carlyle, Nietzsche, Wilde, George, and Gide. All of these authors had an influence on Grove's thinking, but Nietzsche gains a special significance. His is the only influence important throughout Grove's oeuvre, and, as the first chapters of this thesis show, he influenced Grove not only directly but also indirectly through the influence he exerted upon Grove's contemporaries, particularly George and Gide, who imparted this influence to Grove.

Grove's oeuvre suggests his conviction that regardless of which culture or civilization people are living in, they have to act and fulfill themselves as human beings. The various characters in Grove's works are seeking to fulfill themselves in various ways. Grove does not offer a patent solution for any dilemma, but his fiction exposes the delusion that a person can be the complete master of his fate. He suggests that human beings have to make the best of the world as it is and not pin their hopes upon a different kind of existence. The Nietzschean orientation toward complete self-mastery and a "higher" life – considered by Greve in Germany as a means to gain satisfaction – is completely refuted by his Canadian works.

The philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche thus exerted a significant influence upon Grove's writing. It was certainly not the only influence; other thinkers such as Plato, Bergson, and Spengler also contributed to the shaping of individual works. Nietzschean concepts, however, are the only ones present throughout the forty-five years during which Grove published his books. Concentrating on these Nietzschean elements, we have seen how the direction of Grove's thought developed in his oeuvre. Understanding this development, we can discard Margaret Stobie's statement, "Grove's ideas and convictions . . . by this time [1925] were fixed. They change very little in the twenty years of his

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[7](cont'd) Greve-Grove connection two years after Birbalsingh's essay was published.

writing life in Canada" ("Ants," 421). As the preceding study has shown, there is a significant development in Grove's views. While he consistently rejected the Nietzschean approach to life as a way to gain happiness, he did initially not present a viable alternative. Only the books published after 1930 question the importance of the individual to such an extent that a communal life appears feasible and worthwhile for the protagonists.

Wanderungen indicates that Grove began his career as an idealist who believed in the possibility of practising the suggestions for a better life that Nietzsche had put forth. Throughout his Canadian oeuvre, Grove harshly criticized attitudes that are coherent with Nietzschean prescriptions. Only his later novels suggest that he developed a positive alternative to his initial idealism. Beginning with *Fruits of the Earth*, Grove's novels give a positive portrait of a humanist pragmatism that stresses emotional satisfaction and practical solutions for the problems of actual existence.

Frederick Philip Grove's oeuvre is characterized by protagonists who have to find a suitable way of life in a world that does not fit their expectations. In all of his books, Nietzschean philosophy contributes to the characters' approaches to their lives, and all of these characters cause suffering to themselves and others because of the Nietzschean elements in their ambitions. The consideration of individual novels makes it possible to account differently for some of these problems and, consequently, to miss the Nietzschean element in the writing. Only a consideration of Grove's whole oeuvre demonstrates how pervasive Nietzsche's influence is and how the works can be explained by reference to this influence. In his book on Nietzsche, Walter Kaufmann suggested that "comprehensive studies of the debts various 'existentialists' owe to Nietzsche might illuminate their works" (422). This thesis is an example of such a study and will, hopefully, contribute to a better understanding of "the first Canadian novelist who can justly be described as a major literary figure" (MacLulich, 15), Frederick Philip Grove.

Understanding the Nietzschean element in Grove's oeuvre, we are able to see that Grove was considerably more than just a chronicler of life in early twentieth century western Canada. In his fictions he explored significant questions about the striving for happiness and the search for a satisfactory philosophy of life. These questions and Grove's answers are significant anywhere and at any time. In his developing oeuvre we see Grove gradually developing an alternative to the values proclaimed by Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the most important figures for the development of modern thought.

Reading Grove's works in the light of Nietzschean philosophy, we have seen that his perceptions were influenced to a large degree by the intellectual climate that prevailed in Central Europe at the turn of the century. He undoubtedly dealt with Canadian materials, but he approached them from a distinctly Central European point of view which was strongly informed by a European, specifically German, philosophy. This study has shown that we have to make Frederick Philip Grove's very complex international background a central part of any attempt to gain a comprehensive understanding of this serious and significant author.

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